Nov. 25, 1985

THE NEW YORKER

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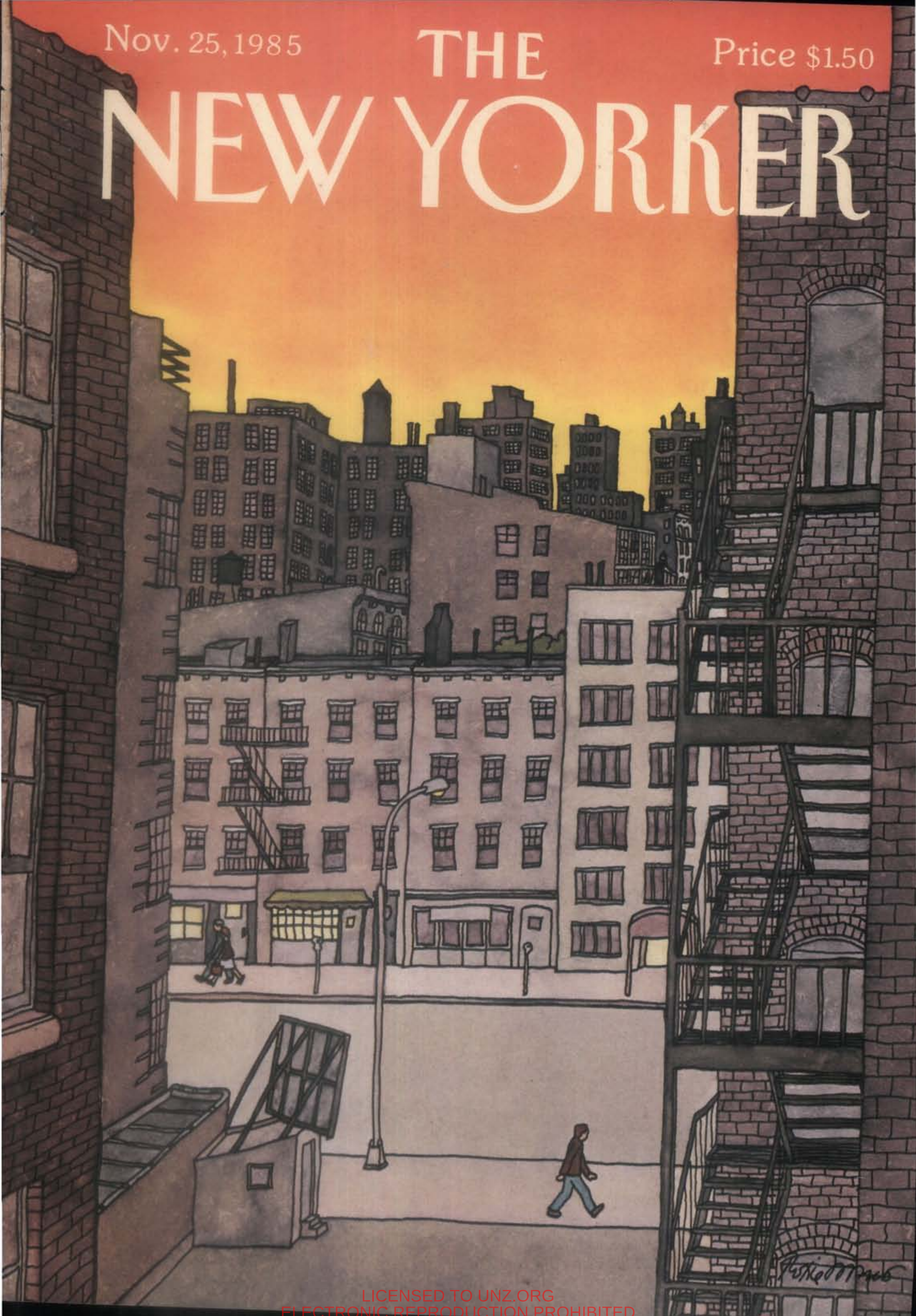

No other voice could describe a Rolex so beautifully.

Kiri Te Kanawa gave her first public singing performance at the age of fifteen to a local ladies' committee in Auckland, New Zealand.

Impressed they may have been, but none of those ladies could have realized they were listening to a girl destined to become one of the finest opera sopranos in the world.

Her appearance fee was then a munificent four dollars.

Today, after hearing her perform the role of Donna Elvira from "Don Giovanni" in Paris, or the Countess from "Le Nozze di Figaro" at Covent Garden, many critics have been moved to describe her voice as priceless.

New York, London, Paris, Milan — wherever this truly international star performs, audiences respond with standing ovations. And a film of "Don Giovanni" starring Kiri as Donna Elvira is another huge success with opera lovers around the world.

"I owe a lot to my basic technique," she says. "My early training and the way in which my voice has developed means I can usually sing my way through colds and sore throats without any problems... in fact, anything short of laryngitis and tonsillitis combined! And, of course, consistency of performance is extremely important.

"That can make or break your reputation."

Given her opinions, it is very gratifying to note Kiri Te Kanawa's choice of wristwatch.

A gold Rolex Oyster Lady-Datejust. "Simply marvelous," she says.

"In all the years I've had the watch it's never gone off key, and it's never been ill. And I know how hard it is to always be 100 percent.

"Every day, wherever I am, I spend at least an hour singing part of a role just to keep my voice at its best. So I can really appreciate the time, skill and effort that goes into something so beautiful and so precise as this watch."

Kiri Te Kanawa and her Rolex Lady-Datejust.

No other voice could have put it quite so beautifully.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

THE THEATRE

(Next week, some theatres, as indicated below, will rearrange their schedules because of Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 28. There may be further changes, so it would be wise to check with the newspapers before making plans.)

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Anteroom—A play by Harry Kondoleon. Opens Wednesday, Nov. 20. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

As Is—This touching play by William M. Hoffman concerns a personable young homosexual who is afflicted with AIDS, and is also a documentary of sorts about his milieu in this city. The lively, impressionistic performance was directed by Marshall W. Mason, and the acting by the large cast, several of whom appear in multiple roles, is just right. With Jonathan Hogan and Jonathan Hadary. (Reviewed in our issue of 3/25/85.) (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, and Thanksgiving, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Friday, Nov. 29, at 3.)

Aunt Dan & Lemon—A debate on the nature of good and evil, by Wallace Shawn, acted to perfection by Kathryn Pogson, Linda Hunt, Linda Bassett, Lynsey Baxter, and the author himself. The director is Max Stafford-Clark. (11/4/85) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Big River—William Hauptman and Roger Miller have drawn an agreeably sentimental musical out of "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," and Mark Twain in Heaven has reason to be satisfied with the results. (5/13/85) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Nov. 27, and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Friday, Nov. 29, at 2.)

Biloxi Blues—A further chapter in the life story of Eugene Morris Jerome, a literary stand-in for the author, Neil Simon. The time is 1943, Eugene is in the Army, and his adventures in Biloxi are truly not to be believed. The director, Gene Saks, has worked hard to squeeze the last drop of humor out of this peculiar fruit. (4/8/85) (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 757-8646. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Nov. 27, and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Friday, Nov. 29, at 3.)

Circle Repertory Company—Presenting two plays. **TALLEY & SON:** A lightly revised version of Lanford Wilson's fine play "A Tale Told." . . . **TOMORROW'S MONDAY:** A rather weak domestic comedy that Paul Osborn wrote in 1936. Farley Granger, Helen Stenborg, Richard Backus, and Robert Macnaughton are among the good actors on hand. (Both shows reviewed in our issue of 11/4/85.) (99 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. For information about play scheduling, call 924-7100.)

Curse of the Starving Class—A revival of Sam Shepard's brilliant, humorous, passionate play. (9/2/85) (890 Theatre, Broadway at 19th St. 533-8834. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 3.)

Dames at Sea—A revival of a musical by Jim Wise (score) and George Haimsohn and Robin Miller (book and lyrics). (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Nov. 27, and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Friday, Nov. 29, at 3.)

Double Image Theatre—Final performances of two plays in repertory. **FILTHY RICH:** A play by George F. Walker. Wednesday through Friday, Nov. 20-22, at 8. . . . **SAVAGE IN LIMBO:** The scene is a bar in the Bronx, and many of the rackety customers are in personal trouble of one sort or another. John Patrick Shanley's play is often funny, though seldom quite believable. The production, under Mark Linn-Baker's direction, is splendid; with Mary McDonnell, Deborah Hedwall, and Randle Mell, among others. Saturday, Nov. 23, at 3 and 8, and Sunday, Nov. 24, at 3. (47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 247-5361.)

Doubles—A number of coarse jokes about Jewish husbands and Jewish wives fill an evening that purports to be about four middle-aged tennis players in Connecticut. Written by David Wiltse and starring Keir Dullea, Cliff Gorman, Robert Reed, and Charles Repole. (5/20/85) (Ritz, 219 W. 48th St. 582-4022. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Nov. 27, and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Friday, Nov. 29.)

Equity Library Theatre—An enchanting revival of the enchanting musical **SHE LOVES ME.** (Reviewed in this issue.) (103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Nightly at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 2:30. Closes Sunday, Nov. 24. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)

Ghashiram Kotwal—An experimental theatre work by Indian playwright Vijay Tendulkar, in its English-language American première. A presentation of the Pan Asian Repertory Theatre. (Playhouse 46, 423 W. 46th St. 245-2660. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Thanksgiving, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2; special matinée Wednesday, Nov. 27.)

The Golden Land—An extremely sentimental musical about Jewish immigrants to the United States. The company of three men and three women includes a fine singer named Marc Krause. (Second Avenue Theatre, 189 Second Ave., at 12th St. 674-1460. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 1 and 5.)

Hamelin: A Musical Tale from Rats to Riches—A musical dud. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturday, Nov. 23, at 7 and 10, and Sundays and Saturday, Nov. 30, at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3; special matinée Saturday, Nov. 30.)

The Iceman Cometh—Over four and a half hours of muddled conversation on that tired schoolboy subject of debate: 'Resolved, that man cannot live without illusions.' With Jason

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Robards, Donald Moffat, and Barnard Hughes. (10/7/85) (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 575-9200. Tuesdays and Thursdays—except Thanksgiving—through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. Special performance Monday, Nov. 25, at 7.)

I'm Not Rappaport—Herb Gardner's synthetic, though often entertaining, comedy about two old men who share a bench in Central Park is given an expert performance by Cleavon Little and Judd Hirsch. (6/17/85) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Thanksgiving, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Friday, Nov. 29, at 3.)

The Importance of Being Earnest—A revival of the 1895 Oscar Wilde comedy. With Dina Merrill. (Samuel Beckett, 412 W. 42nd St. 594-2826. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Thanksgiving, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Friday, Nov. 29, at 3.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Presenting two Victor Herbert productions. **NAUGHTY MARIETTA:** Friday, Nov. 22, at 8; Saturday, Nov. 23, at 3:30 and 8; and Sunday, Nov. 24, at 3:30. . . . **BABES IN TOYLAND:** Saturday, Nov. 30, at 3:30 and 8, and Sunday, Dec. 1, at 3:30. (Norman Thomas, 111 E. 33rd St. 532-6180.)

Love As We Know It—Act I of Gil Schwartz' very funny comedy is a clutch of skits; Act II is a skittish play. The subject is sex, and it is treated, more often than not, with originality and gaiety and style. Polly Draper, Michael Countryman, Marek Johnson, John C. McGinley, and Karen Ludwig are the actors; Josh Mostel directed. (11/11/85) (Intar, 410 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Closes Saturday, Nov. 23.)

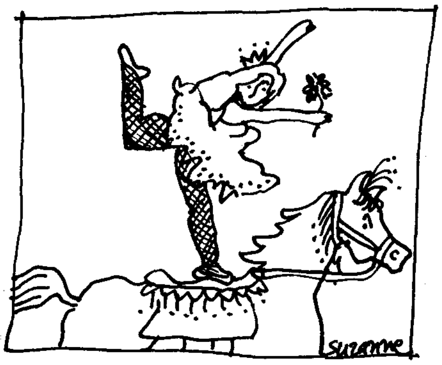
A Map of the World—An expatriate Indian novelist of more or less conservative views confronts a young English journalist from a socialist publication at a conference on world poverty in Bombay. David Hare's play becomes muddled at times, but it is never dull, and the acting of the large cast is very good. Roshan Seth and Željko Ivanek are splendid in the leading roles. Mr. Hare directed. (10/14/85) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Nov. 24.)

The Marriage of Figaro—The director Andrei Serban has a way of freshening up the classics that leaves them hanging on the ropes, and Beaumarchais's comedy is no exception. (10/28/85) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Thanksgiving, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Friday, Nov. 29, at 2.)

Mayor—A musical based on the best-seller of the same name by Edward I. Koch. With a score and lyrics by Charles Strouse and a book by Warren Leight. (Latin Quarter, Broadway at 48th St. 586-3905. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Thanksgiving, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Friday, Nov. 29, at 3.)

Mirror Repertory Company—The first in this season's series of productions is a return engagement of Maurice Valency's adaptation of **THE MADWOMAN OF CHAILLOT**, by Jean Giraudoux. (Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Nov. 27, at 2, Saturdays at 5, and Sundays at 3. For tickets, call 223-6440.)

Negro Ensemble Company—The American of **EYES OF THE AMERICAN** is a C.I.A. man who comes to a newly independent island in the West Indies. The role is portrayed by the stalwart Graham Brown, who also doubles as a dictator; the other actors—just as good—are Glynn Turman and Seret Scott. The play, by Samm-Art Williams, is always absorbing but not always clear. (11/11/85) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-8545. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 3 and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Sunday, Dec. 1.)



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Nonsectarian Conversations with the Dead—A play by Laurie Carlos. (Henry Street Settlement's New Federal Theatre, 466 Grand St. 598-0400. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Saturday at 3 and Sunday at 5. Closes Sunday, Nov. 24.)

The Normal Heart—An interminable non-play about the victims of AIDS in the homosexual community of this city. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

The Odd Couple—Neil Simon has turned his comedy about a pair of ill-matched men into a non-comedy about a pair of women the like of which has never been seen on earth, much less on Riverside Drive. (6/24/85) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Nov. 27, and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Friday, Nov. 29, at 3.)

Oliver Oliver—This revival of a weak comedy by Paul Osborn is satisfactorily performed under the direction of Vivian Matalon. With Nancy Marchand and Frances Sternhagen in the leading roles. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Manhattan Theatre Club at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Sunday, Dec. 1.)

Orphans—A melodrama, by Lyle Kessler, about two young brothers—one a street thief and pickpocket, the other an apparent dimwit—and an older mobster who takes over their house and their lives. The first act works quite well, the second is merely serviceable, but what really counts is the performance, under the dynamic direction of Gary Sinise. The show is an import from the Steppenwolf Company of Chicago. (5/20/85) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays, except Thanksgiving, at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3; special matinée Friday, Nov. 29.)

Penn & Teller—A sublime combination of conjuring and comedy. Penn Jillette does the talking; Teller is silent. (5/6/85) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Wednesdays through Fridays, except Thanksgiving, at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3; special matinée Friday, Nov. 29, at 2.)

San Francisco Mime Troupe—Performances of **STEEL TOWN**, a musical with a book by Joan Holden and a score by Bruce Barthol and Eduardo Robledo. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Wednesdays through Saturdays, except Thanksgiving, at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3 and Saturday, Nov. 30, at 2; special matinées Wednesday, Nov. 20, and Friday, Nov. 29, at 2. Closes Sunday, Dec. 1.)

The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe—A one-person vaudeville show, starring the antic and frantic Lily Tomlin in a series of impersonations—some harsh, some tender—written for her by Jane Wagner. (10/7/85) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Thursdays, except Thanksgiving, at 8; Fridays at 7 and 10; and Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Nov. 27, and Saturdays at 2. Special performance Monday, Nov. 25, at 8.)

Singin' in the Rain—An unwelcome curiosity, which attempts to translate an immortal movie musical into a Broadway show; everyone concerned has labored hard, always in vain. (7/15/85) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Nightly, except Sunday through Tuesday, Nov. 24-26, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2; special matinées Thanksgiving Day at 3, and Friday, Nov. 29, at 2.)

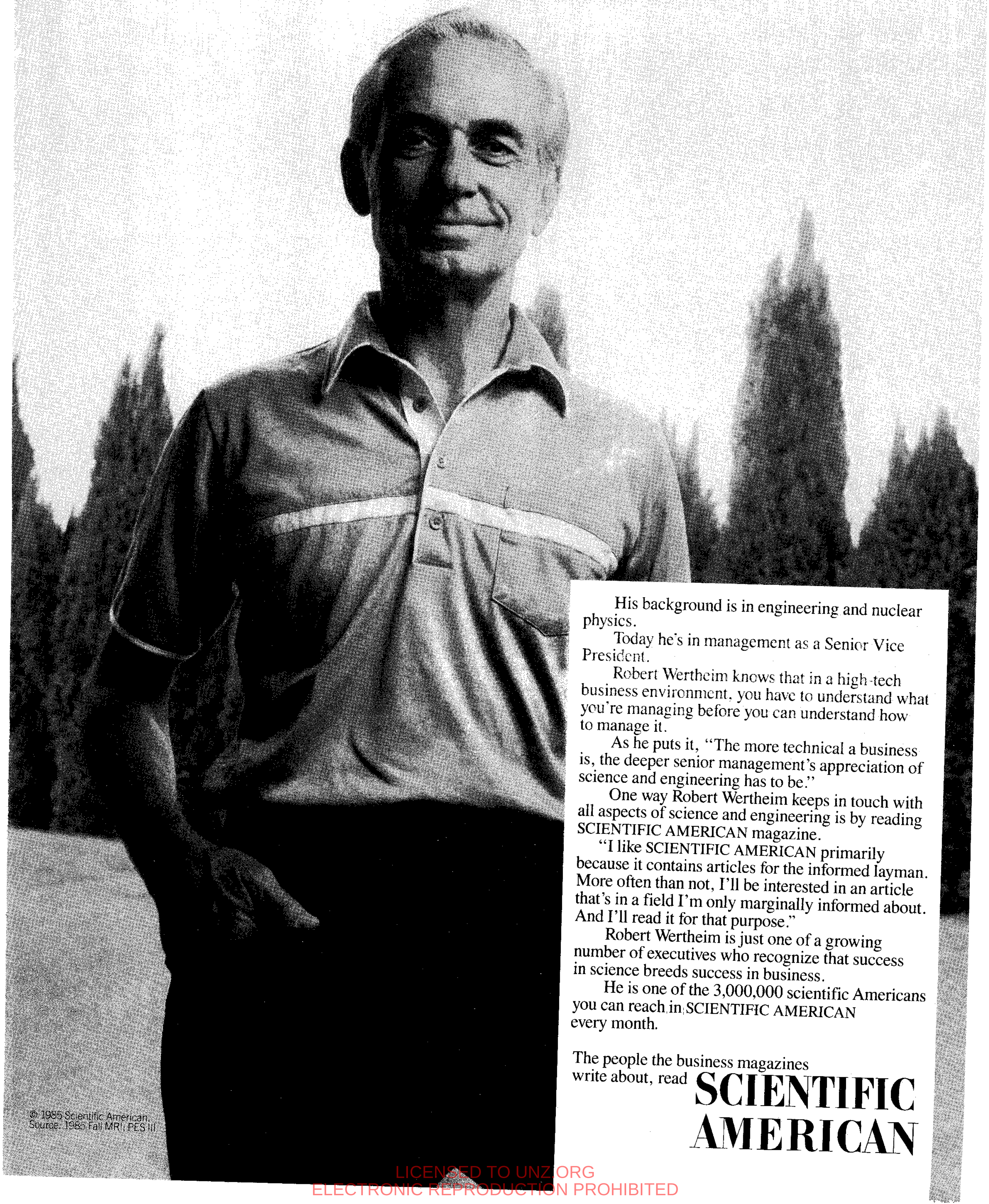
Song and Dance—Imported from England and tricked up for the American trade, this uneasy linking of song (first act) and dance (second act) is redeemed in part by the attractiveness of the chief performers, Bernadette Peters and Christopher d'Amboise. (9/30/85) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Nov. 27, and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Friday, Nov. 29, at 3.)

What's a Nice Country Like You . . . Doing in a State Like This?—An updated version of the 1973 satirical revue by the original creators, composer Cary Hoffman and lyricist Ira Gasman. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 691-6226. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Yours, Anne—A vapid musical based on Anne Frank's diary. (10/28/85) (Playhouse 91, 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Wednesday, Nov. 27, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2:30, and Saturdays and Sundays at 3; special matinée Friday, Nov. 29, at 2.)

Long Runs—**BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS:** Neil Simon looks back with fondness upon his youth in the gloomy thirties. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Nov. 27, and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Friday, Nov. 29, at 3.) . . . **LA CAGE AUX FOLLES:** A musical about a pair of tenderhearted middle-aged lovers presiding over a drag-queen night club in Saint-Tropez; the production is one of the most beautiful—and extravagant—ever to reach Broadway. Jerry Herman wrote the music and lyrics; the book is by Harvey Fierstein. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Nov. 27, and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Friday, Nov. 29.) . . . **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to the sets and costumes by John Napier. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Nov. 27, and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Friday, Nov. 29, at 3.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays and Thanksgiving, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Friday, Nov. 29, at 3.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** 10,640 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE FOREIGNER:** A very funny play by the late Larry Shue, with good performances by every single member of the company, most notably by Kevin Geer as a lovable half-wit. Jerry Zaks was the admirable director. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. Tuesdays through Fridays, except Thanksgiving, at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3. Special performance Monday, Nov. 25, at 8.) . . . **42ND STREET:** A musical based on the old Warner Brothers movie and by no means an improvement on it. Directed and choreographed by the late Gower Cham-

Robert Wertheim of Lockheed is a scientific American.



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pion. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Nov. 27, and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Friday, Nov. 29, at 3.) . . . **LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS:** Taking off from Roger Corman's 1960 horror quickie about a man-eating plant, this exuberant, jokey musical is wholly free of camp. The score is by Alan Menken, and Howard Ashman directed and wrote the book and lyrics. Martin P. Robinson designed the menacing plant. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 2 and 5.) . . . **OH! CALCUTTA!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 302-2302. Mondays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL—The annual Christmas show, with, of course, the Rockettes. (Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 246-4600. Wednesdays and Monday, Nov. 25, at 11 and 2:30; Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturday, Nov. 23, at 2:30 and 7:30; Sunday, Nov. 24, at 12:30 and 4; and Saturday, Nov. 30, at 10, 1:30, 5, and 8:30. Through Thursday, Jan. 9.)

BIG APPLE CIRCUS—Opening performances of the fifth season at Lincoln Center for this one-ring tent circus. (Damrosch Park. Wednesday, Nov. 20, at 7:30; Thursday and Friday, Nov. 21-22, at 11 and 7:30; Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 23-24, at 12:30 and 4; Monday and Tuesday, Nov. 25-26, at 11 and 7:30; Thanksgiving at 7:30; Friday, Nov. 29, at 12:30 and 4; and Saturday, Nov. 30, at 2 and 7:30. Through Sunday, Jan. 5. For information about tickets, call 860-7320.)

FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1985—A musical satire of Shubert Alley denizens. The lyrics to the song parodies are by Gerard Alessandrini. (Palsson's Upstairs, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8:30; Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30 and 11:30; and Sundays at 8:30.)

DANCE

NEW YORK CITY BALLET—Tentative schedule—Wednesday, Nov. 20, at 8: "Ballo della Regina," "Concerto for Two Solo Pianos," and "Cortège Hongrois." . . . ¶ Thursday, Nov. 21, at 8: "Divertimento No. 15," an unnamed ballet (première), and "Symphony in Three Movements." . . . ¶ Friday, Nov. 22, at 8: "Apollo," "Firebird," and "Cortège Hongrois." . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 23, at 2: The new ballet, "Firebird," and "Symphony in Three Movements." . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 23, at 8: "Apollo," "Firebird," and "Cortège Hongrois." . . . ¶ Sunday, Nov. 24, at 1: "Ballo della Regina," "Pas de Deux," the new ballet, and "Cortège Hongrois." . . . ¶ Sunday, Nov. 24, at 7: "Ballo della Regina," "Concerto for Two Solo Pianos," and "Divertimento No. 15." . . . ¶ Tuesday, Nov. 26, at 8: "Divertimento No. 15," "Concerto for Two Solo Pianos," and "Firebird." . . . ¶ Wednesday, Nov. 27, at 8: "Apollo," "Firebird," and "Brahms-Schoenberg Quartet." . . . ¶ Friday, Nov. 29, at 8: The new ballet, "Firebird," and "Brahms-Schoenberg Quartet." . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 30, at 2: "Ballo della Regina," "Concerto for Two Solo Pianos," and "Cortège Hongrois." . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 30, at 8: "Divertimento No. 15," "Concerto for Two Solo Pianos," and "Cortège Hongrois." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through Sunday, Feb. 23.)

MAURICE BÉJART'S BALLET OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY—Wednesday, Nov. 20, at 8: "Dionysos Suite," "Symphonie pour un Homme Seul," and "Le Sacre du Printemps." . . . ¶ Thursday, Nov. 21, at 8, and Saturday, Nov. 23, at 2: "Dionysos Suite," "Salome," and "Le Sacre du Printemps." . . . ¶ Friday, Nov. 22, at 8: "7 Greek Dances," "Sonata for Three," and "Le Baiser de la Fée." . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 23, at 8: "Le Sacre du Printemps," "5 Preludes for Cello," "Salome," "Symphonie pour un Homme Seul," and "Bolero." . . . ¶ Sunday, Nov. 24, at 3: "7 Greek Dances," "Salome," and "Le Baiser de la Fée." . . . ¶ Tuesday, Nov. 26, at 8: "Dionysos Suite," "5 Preludes for Cello," "Salome," and "Le Sacre du Printemps." . . . ¶ Wednesday, Nov. 27, and Friday, Nov. 29, at 8, and Saturday, Nov. 30, at 2: "Le Concours." . . . ¶ Thursday, Nov. 28, at 8: "Dionysos Suite," "Sonata for Three," and "Le Baiser de la Fée." . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 30, at 8: "Dionysos Suite," "Symphonie pour un Homme Seul," and "Le Baiser de la Fée." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Through Sunday, Dec. 1.)

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TANGO ARGENTINO—A troupe of thirty dancers, singers, and musicians. (Mark Hellinger Theatre, 237 W. 51st St. 757-7064. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

KAZUO OHNO AND KUNIKO KISANUKI—Solo performances by two dancers from Japan—**OHNO:** Wednesday, Nov. 20, at 7:30; Friday, Nov. 22, at 8; Saturday, Nov. 23, at 2; and Sunday, Nov. 24, at 7:30. . . . **KISANUKI:** Thursday, Nov. 21, and Saturday, Nov. 23, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 24, at 2. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

EIKO & KOMA—"Thirst" and "Elegy." (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 21-23, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 24, at 3.)

MIRMDANCE—A program of modern dance. (Midtown Y, 344 E. 14th St. Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 23-24, at 8. For information about tickets, call 673-2207.)

RIVERSIDE DANCE FESTIVAL—Performances by two companies. **CHARLES MOORE DANCE THEATRE:** Thursday, Nov. 21, and Saturday, Nov. 23, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 24, at 2. . . . **BALLETFORE:** "The Nutcracker." Friday, Nov. 29, at 7; Saturday, Nov. 30, at 2 and 7; and Sunday, Dec. 1, at 2. (Theatre of the Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. 864-2929.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**JULIE WILSON,** a wonderfully convincing singer, concentrates on Gershwin tunes Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen in the Oak Room. Dining.

ANGRY SQUIRE, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—A nautical bar and restaurant and music haunt. The partial lineup: Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 20-21, guitarist **SAL SALVADOR;** Friday and Saturday, Nov. 22-23, bluesy saxophonist **HANK MOBLEY** and his band. Sets begin Sundays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at ten.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—**BLOSSOM DEARIE** is ensconced in this club, singing in her small, delicate, uncomplicated, diction-perfect voice. Early-evening concerts Wednesdays through Saturdays from six-thirty to eight-thirty. A little later on in the evening, **MARTHA RAYE** goes onstage to sing at nine on Tuesdays and at nine and eleven Wednesdays through Saturdays.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Jazz violinists **JOHN BLAKE, DIDIER LOCKWOOD, NOEL POINTER,** and **MICHAL URBANIAK** are performing together through Sunday, Nov. 24; on Tuesday, Nov. 26, tenor saxophonist **STANLEY TURRENTINE** will arrive to trade sets with the **RAY BROWN** trio. Music from nine. **TED CURSON** conducts after-hours jams nightly, except Mondays, following the last set and lasting until about four. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—The oh-so-varied lineup: Wednesday, Nov. 20, the New Sam & Dave, with Dave Prater and Nicholas Tremulis; Thursday, Nov. 21, Jesse Colin Young; Friday and Saturday, Nov. 22-23, singer **FLORA PURIM** and percussionist **AIRTO;** Sunday, Nov. 24, Renaissance; Monday, Nov. 25, Robyn Hitchcock & the Egyptians and Marti Jones with Don Dixon; Tuesday, Nov. 26, Bill Chinnock and Eddie & the Tide; Friday, Nov. 29, Cousin Brucie's Heroes & Legends; and Saturday, Nov. 30, **DONOVAN** and **CHRISTINE LAVIN.** Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A convivial, dark-panelled, real New York bar with live jazz, in the form of pianist **STEVE KUHN,** who works with bassist **RON CARTER** on Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 20-21, and with bassist **STEVE LA SPINA** on Friday and Saturday, Nov. 22-23. On Monday, Nov. 25, **RONNIE MATHEWS** will begin a week of piano-bass duets with **RAY DRUMMOND.** Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

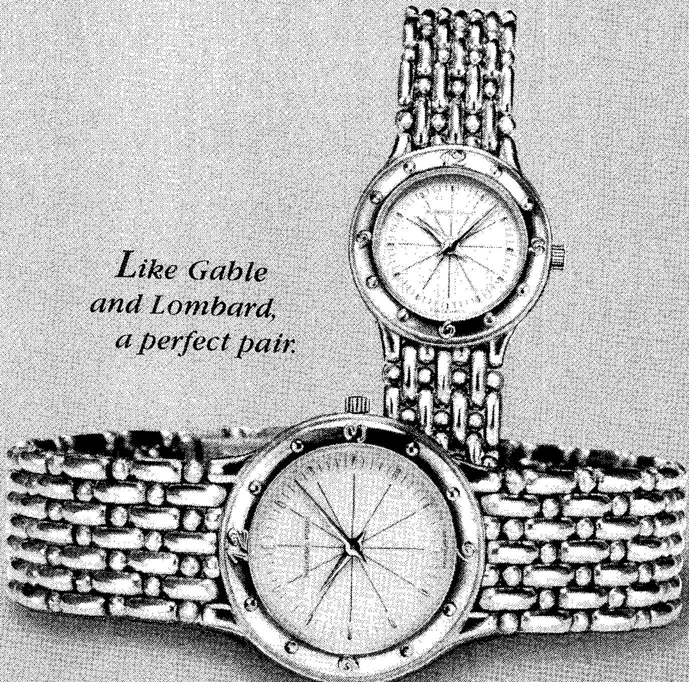
CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—In the Café Carlyle, the exuberant **BOBBY SHORT** is back in action with his trusty sidekicks, bassist **BEVERLY PEER** and drummer **ROBBIE SCOTT.** Music Tuesdays through Saturdays at ten and midnight. . . . ¶ And over in the Bemelmans Bar you will find singer and pianist **BARBARA CARROLL** performing from ten Tuesdays through Saturdays.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Exposed rafters, weathered, splintery wood posts, decrepit neon beer signs, and a general ramshackle feel. All this and rock and roll, too. Monday is showcase night. Shows nightly from long after nine-thirty.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—Behind a dark, unprepossessing, easy-to-miss front door, down a corridor with industrial-strength corrugated-metal walls (the kind that would tempt any kid with a stick), and down a flight of stairs, there is this snazzy, cozy jazz room. Harmonica-ist, guitarist, and whistler **TOOTS THIELEMANS** is here through Sunday, Nov. 24, and on Tuesday, Nov. 26, singer **ASTRUD GILBERTO** will arrive. Mondays are claimed by guitarist and inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, who was once known as Rhubarb Red. Sets begin Sundays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight. Dining.

FOLK CITY, 130 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (254-8449)—Considerably more musical than Tie City or Food City. Wednesday, Nov. 20, Peter Blegvad, the Vipers, and the Ring Theatre; Thursday, Nov. 21, New York songwriters' showcase; Saturday, Nov. 23, Aztec Two-Step and Jake Jacobs; Sunday, Nov. 24, Jane Brucker; Wednesday, Nov. 27, the Splatcats; and Saturday, Nov. 30, Livingston Taylor and Andy Breckman. Shows are usually at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty.

FREDDY'S, 308 E. 49th St. (888-1633)—**MARGARET WHITING** is singing here Mondays through



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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Thursdays at nine-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine and eleven. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Gregory's, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—**DAVID ALLYN** sings with Scott Hardy and Jay Anderson through Sunday, Nov. 24; Alicia Sherman, Peter Madsen, and Phil Bowler will take over on Wednesday, Nov. 27; Mondays belong to singer Amy London, pianist Lonnie Smith, and bassist Sean Smith; and Tuesdays are reserved for guitarist **ATTILA ZOLLER'S** trio. All these groups begin about ten.

Hanratty's, 1754 Second Ave., at 91st St. (289-3200)—A spiffy bar and back-room restaurant with a piano in it. **ROGER KELLAWAY** can be found at the piano through Saturday, Nov. 23, and on Tuesday, Nov. 26, **DICK WELLSTOOD** will take charge. Sundays, Keith MacDonald owns the keyboard, and on Mondays you can hear **DICK HYMAN.** Music Sundays through Thursdays from eight-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays from nine.

Knickerbocker Saloon, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A pleasant corner restaurant and bar that is crowded with good listeners listening to **HILTON RUIZ,** a fine, driving pianist, and **MAJOR HOLLEY,** a Slam Stewart-inspired, bowing, humming bassist. Music Tuesdays through Saturdays from about nine-thirty.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—*No, this isn't the Department of* Rockabilly at the New School. It's a degentrified Schrafft's where the authentic Texas ambience is more representative of Austin than of Houston or Dallas. The folk, country, blues, and rock: Wednesday, Nov. 20, John Mayall's Bluesbreakers; Thursday, Nov. 21, **BURNING SPEAR** and the Majestics; Friday and Saturday, Nov. 22-23, Loup Gurou; Sunday and Monday, Nov. 24-25, **JERRY JEFF WALKER;** Tuesday and Wednesday, Nov. 26-27, the **RADIATORS;** Thursday, Nov. 28, **DAVE MASON;** and Friday and Saturday, Nov. 29-30, **DR. JOHN.** Music after nine. Dining.

Mikell's, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—The music scene here is cooler than a Columbus Avenue gelato and the music hotter than a Columbus Avenue taco. The lineup: Wednesday, Nov. 20, Joe Passaro; Friday and Saturday, Nov. 22-23, Latin-jazz altoist **PAQUITO D'RIVERA** and his band; Monday, Nov. 25, **JUMP STREET;** Wednesday, Nov. 27, **KENIA;** and Friday and Saturday, Nov. 29-30, flutist **DAVE VALENTIN.** Music from about ten until two. Dining. Closed Thanksgiving.

Ritz, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Rock from the fifties to the eighties in a half-century-old ballroom: Friday, Nov. 22, guitarist **ADRIAN BELEW;** Saturday, Nov. 23, A.P.B.; Sunday, Nov. 24, John Kay & Steppenwolf and the Guess Who; Wednesday, Nov. 27, Otis Day & the Knights; and Friday and Saturday, Nov. 29-30, 'til Tuesday and Simon F. Shows Mondays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at eleven. Dancing.

Seventh Avenue South, 21 Seventh Ave. S., at Leroy St. (242-4694)—Jazz, blues, and sambas upstairs in a simple, basic, music-first club. Wednesday, Nov. 20, the Ordinaires, and Friday and Saturday, Nov. 22-23, saxophonist **STEVE SLAGLE,** pianist **MIKE STERN,** and their band. Mondays belong to the **TOM PIERSON** orchestra. Music from nine-thirty.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great place to listen to Brazilian, Caribbean, and African music—Brazilian-jazz groups, samba bands, reggaeists, and all-percussion ensembles that perform *carnaval* music—and it tends to be swirling, heady, wonderful stuff. Wednesday, Nov. 20, salsa vocalist **CELIA CRUZ,** with **DANIEL PONCÉ;** Thursday, Nov. 21, **CELIA CRUZ,** with **TITO PUENTE;** Friday, Nov. 22, Tabou Combo; Saturday, Nov. 23, **PÉ-DE-BOI;** Monday and Tuesday, Nov. 25-26, **NANA VASCONCELOS** and **ZEZÉ MOTTA;** Wednesday, Nov. 27, **MUTABARUKA;** Friday, Nov. 29, **HERBIE MANN & THE FAMILY OF MANN;** and Saturday, Nov. 30, **LOREMIL MACHADO.** Closed Sundays and Thanksgiving.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—The **ART ENSEMBLE OF CHICAGO** is assembled through Sunday, Nov. 24; Monday, Nov. 25, will belong to singer **DAKOTA STATON;** and on Tuesday, Nov. 26, tenor saxophonist **ARCHIE SHEPP** will bring in his group. Shows from about ten. Dining.

Tramps, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—A blues and rock club. The schedule: Wednesday, Nov. 20, rock singer and guitarist **ELLIOTT MURPHY'S** band; Friday and Saturday, Nov. 22-23, blues harpist **CAREY BELL** and his Chicago-blues band—it's one of the best blues bands around; they're sharp and loose and tight and energetic all at once—which features guitarist **LURIE BELL;** Monday, Nov. 25, La Bamba & the Hubcaps; and Tuesday, Nov. 26, the Delancey Street Hawaiians. Thursdays are claimed by Kristi Rose and Chris Christos. Music after nine-thirty.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—Mondays after nine are salsa nights in the barnlike downstairs room; on Nov. 25, **EL GRAN COMBO, LOUIE RAMIREZ & REY DE LA PAZ,** and **DAVID (FATHEAD) NEWMAN,** the guest jazz soloist, will all be here. Fridays and Saturdays are swing-music-and-jitterbug nights, with the **HARLEM BLUES AND JAZZ BAND** and others performing at nine and eleven. . . . ¶ Meanwhile, out on the Terrace, **KIRK LIGHTSEY** and **JAMIL NASSER** are the piano-bass event nightly, except Mondays, from nine-thirty. And, in addition, jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN** plays Tuesdays with her combo.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—People from all over the world are attracted to this famous, unpretentious basement establishment, fifty years old this year. Vibraharpist **BOBBY HUTCHERSON** heads a quartet—**AL FOSTER, JOHN HICKS,** and **CECIL MC BEE**—through Sunday, Nov. 24, and on Tuesday, Nov. 26, **ELVIN JONES,** the Olympian drummer, will bring in his quintet. Mondays are **MEL LEWIS BIG BAND** nights. Music after ten.

West End, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—Past the steam tables of piping-hot student food (Columbia University is just across Broadway), beyond the pinball machines is a room full of live jazz. The **DUKE'S MEN,** an Ellington-minded septet, is here through Sunday, Nov. 24, and on Wednesday, Nov. 27, singer **LITTLE JIMMY SCOTT** will move in with his quintet. Music nightly from about nine.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A spacious, airy bar connected to a spacious, airy dining room by a spacious, airy passageway with tables and chairs and pianists or guitarists and bassists in it. Pianist **LARRY WILLIS** and bassist **RUFUS REID** through Saturday, Nov. 23; Tuesday through Saturday, Nov. 26-30, pianist **NORMAN SIMMONS** and bassist **LISLE ATKINSON;** Sundays, guitarist **GENE BERTONCINI** and bassist **MICHAEL MOORE;** and every Monday pianist Jim Roberts and bassist Dave Dunaway. Music weeknights from eight and Sundays from seven.

JAZZ / FOLK / ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

Howie Mandell—With Buskin & Batteau. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Thursday, Nov. 21, at 8.)

Abdullah Ibrahim & Ekaya—With Sathima Bea Benjamin and Windsong. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Friday, Nov. 22, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Ferron—With Novi. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Friday, Nov. 22, at 8.)

Carmen Lundy—New School, 66 W. 12th St. Friday, Nov. 22, at 6. *Tickets at the door on* the night of the concert.

Broadway Musical Theatre—The first in a series of programs saluting Broadway composers, this one devoted to the music of Vernon Duke and Jule Styne, performed by Carol Fredette and Richard Rodney Bennett. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Friday, Nov. 22, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the performance.)

Rory Stuart Quartet—St. Peter's Church. 935-2200. Sunday, Nov. 24, at 7.

Adam Ant—Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 246-4600. Tuesday, Nov. 26, at 8.

Don McLean—With the Jordanaires. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, Nov. 27, at 8.)

Maze—With Natalie Cole. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 787-1477. Wednesday, Nov. 27, at 8 and midnight.)

Pete Seeger & Arlo Guthrie—Carnegie Hall. Friday and Saturday, Nov. 29-30, at 8.

The Crusaders and Stanley Clarke—Beacon Theatre. Saturday, Nov. 30, at 8.

Jazz Center of New York—Saturday, Nov. 23, at 9 and 10:30: James Jabbo Ware & the Me We & Them Orchestra. . . . ¶ Friday, Nov. 29, at 9 and 10:30: Bobby Watson and the Curtis Lundy quartet. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 30, at 9: Ran Blake. (380 Lafayette St. 505-5660.)

Irving Plaza—Friday, Nov. 22: B.C. & the Penetrators. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 23: Love and Rockets and Crossfire Choir. (17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. 477-3728. Shows start after 9.)

Jazz on Television—A series of programs featuring jazz performers on TV during the past thirty years is being given at the Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St., through Thursday, Jan. 30. (For information about scheduling, call 752-4690.)

ART

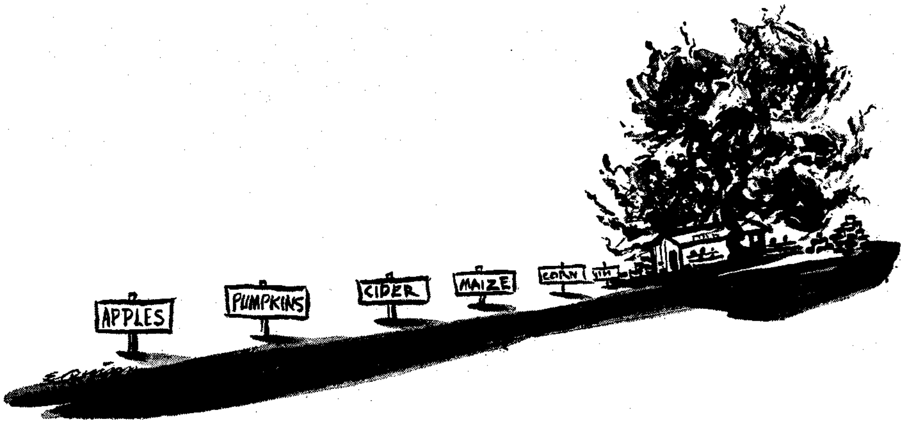
(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. They are closed Thanksgiving Day.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Constantin Alajálov—A showing of this notably observant artist's magazine covers, twenty-two of them for *The New Yorker.* Through Friday, Nov. 29. (Society of Illustrators, 128 E. 63rd St. Open Mondays; open Tuesday evenings until 8; closed Saturdays.)

Hannelore Baron—Abstract paper-and-cloth collages and box constructions. Through Dec. 7. (Schlesinger-Boisanté, 822 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

Julius Bissier (1893-1965)—Abstractions in miniature, usually applied with egg-and-oil tempera. Through Jan. 4. (Lefebre, 41 E. 77th St.)



Carmen Cicero / Thomas Hart Benton (1889-1975)—Expressionist figure paintings. Through Dec. 7. / Paintings, works on paper, and a few sculptures. Through Dec. 14. (Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

Stuart Davis (1892-1964)—Line drawings on canvas and paper. Through Dec. 28. (Salander-O'Reilly, 22 E. 80th St. Open Mondays.)

Richard Diebenkorn—Abstractions; twelve on canvas, nine on paper. Through Dec. 5. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

Richard Erdman—Ribbonlike, convoluted abstract forms carved in marble, for the most part, and sometimes cast in bronze. Through Wednesday, Nov. 27. (Weintraub, 992 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

Michael Goldberg—Red canvases and black canvases from the early sixties. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St.)

Julio Larraz—A monumental bunch of bananas and a steam locomotive speeding through a tropical landscape are seen in these realist paintings. Through Dec. 7. (Haime, 1000 Madison Ave., at 77th St. Open Mondays.)

Pierre Lesieur—Paintings and drawings of interiors, still-lifes, and landscapes. Through Dec. 7. (David Findlay, 984 Madison Ave., at 77th St. Open Mondays.)

Bruno Lucchesi—Terra-cotta figures of everyday New Yorkers—subway riders, a bag lady, moviegoers in line. Through Dec. 7. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Alberto Magnelli (1888-1971)—Paintings by an Italian artist who embraced Cubism and later focussed on geometric abstraction. Through Dec. 14. (Hutton, 33 E. 74th St.)

Giacomo Manzù—Twenty bronzes: still-lifes, Oriental female figures, and one of ecclesiastical trappings left hanging on a chair. Through Dec. 7. (Paul Rosenberg, 20 E. 79th St.)

John Moore—Representational paintings; Winthrop Square in Boston and a waterfront mill in Waterville, Maine, are typical subjects. Through Wednesday, Nov. 27. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

Catherine Murphy—Representational paintings and drawings from the past six years. Through Dec. 20. (Fourcade, 36 E. 75th St.)

Ken Price—Small fired-clay sculptures. Through Saturday, Nov. 23. (Willard, 29 E. 72nd St.)

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901)—Drawings and watercolors from a collection owned by the artist's family. Through Dec. 6. (French Embassy, 972 Fifth Ave., at 78th St. Open daily; opens at noon Saturdays and Sundays. A larger exhibition is at the Museum of Modern Art.)

Tom Wesselmann—Miniature paintings, the Great American Nude among them, which the artist keeps as a sort of index file of his larger works. Through Dec. 7. (Hoffeld, 1020 Madison Ave., at 79th St. Open Mondays.) . . . ¶ All new work: a sculpture, paintings (enamel on either cut-out aluminum or on laser-cut steel), and drawings. Through Dec. 14. (Janis, 110 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Troels Woersel—Paintings, drawings, and prints from 1979 to the present. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Kren, 22 E. 65th St.)

Group Shows—At the **Center for Inter-American Relations**, 680 Park Ave., at 68th St.: Devotional paintings from Peru and Bolivia of the Virgin and angels which initially coincided with the establishment of Christianity there. The works span three centuries and lead to some specifically regional interpretations, of which a gun-carrying, winged archangel is one. Through Feb. 9. (Daily, except Mondays, noon to 6.) . . . **Colnaghi**, 26 E. 80th St.: European paintings, 1550 to 1800. Through Dec. 7. (Open Mondays.) . . . **Coe Kerr**, 49 E. 82nd St.: Impressionist paintings and works on paper by American artists, among them Mary Cassatt, William Merritt Chase, and Childe Hassam. Through Dec. 7. (Open Mondays.) . . . **Mazoh**, 13 E. 76th St.: Paintings by Americans and Europeans, including Morris Louis, Kenneth Noland, Jean Dubuffet, and Hans Hofmann. Through Dec. 14. (Open Mondays.) . . . **Prakapas**, 19 E. 71st St., and **Ex Libris**, 160A E. 70th St.: Drawings by Italian Futurists, chiefly by F.T. Marinetti, the poet and propagandist whose ideas rocked Italy early in this century. Through Dec. 14. (Prakapas opens at noon; Ex Libris opens at noon

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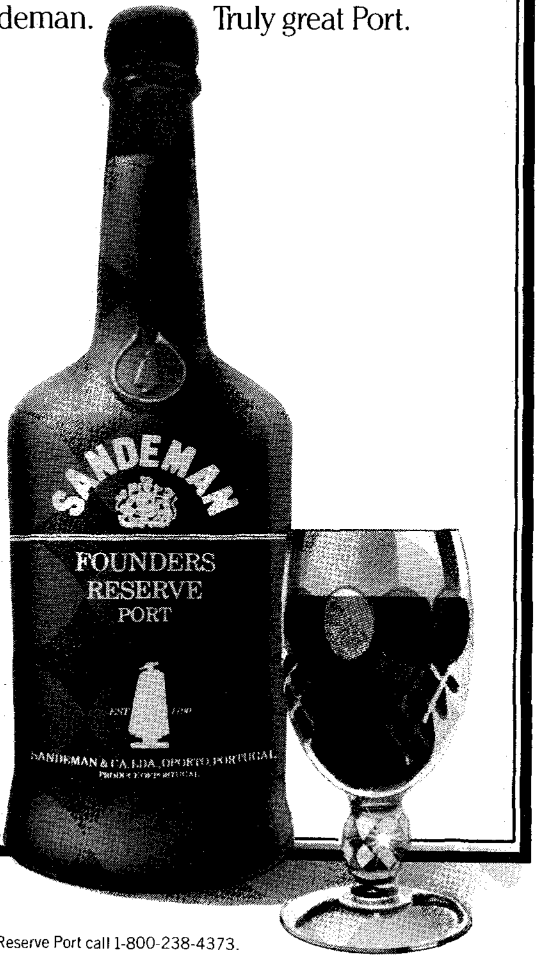

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

on Saturdays.) . . . **WILDENSTEIN,** 19 E. 64th St.: A benefit loan show of paintings and drawings of Paris café scenes by nineteenth- and twentieth-century artists who frequented them. Courbet, Monet, Renoir, Picasso, and Braque are among those included. Through Dec. 20. (Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

SCULPTURE—Expressionist figures that embody darker aspects of human experience—starvation and paranoia, for instance. By Sydney Blum, Scott Richter, Mary Ann Unger, and others. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St.)

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

FREDERIC AMAT / PETER SAUL—Large works on canvas, each consisting of a recognizable image rendered in wax, cast paper, and earth. Also, smaller works on paper using the same ingredients. Through Dec. 12. / Drawings. Through Dec. 31. (Frumkin, 50 W. 57th St.)

SIAH ARMAJANI—Fanciful architectural constructions. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Protetch, 37 W. 57th St.)

GEORGE DE FOREST BRUSH (1855-1941)—American Indian and mother-and-child portraits are among the paintings and drawings in this retrospective. Through Dec. 14. (Berry-Hill, 743 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

GASTON CHAISSAC (1910-64)—Painted-wood constructions based on the human figure and semi-abstract portraits, among other works. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Oscarsson Hood, 41 W. 57th St.)

SALVADOR DALI—Sculptures and prints from the seventies. Through Dec. 7. (Alex Rosenberg, 20 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

JOSÉ DE CREEFT (1884-1982) / **CLAUDE BUCK** (1890-1974)—Figurative sculptures in bronze, wood, and marble, plus works on paper. / Landscape and figure paintings. Through Tuesday, Nov. 26. (Deutsch, 20 W. 57th St.)

ANNE DUNN / LEIGH BEHNKE—Loosely handled paintings of studio interiors and landscapes of New Brunswick, Canada. / Realist paintings on multiple panels—cityscapes, interiors, still-lifes. Through Wednesday, Nov. 27. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

RAYMON ELOZUA—Painted-ceramic reliefs depicting soldiers, eagles, the Statue of Liberty. Through Dec. 14. (Lamagna, 50 W. 57th St.)

ROBERT GOODNOUGH—Abstract paintings completed in the fifties and sixties. Through Dec. 5. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

STEPHEN GREENE—Expressionist paintings. Through Dec. 7. (Pearl, 38 E. 57th St.)

JOHN STUART INGLE—Almost incredibly realistic watercolors of, say, cattleya orchids, fancy chocolates, and ripe pears. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St.)

MINORU KAWABATA / PETER BELLAMY—New paintings. / Photographs of artists who work in New York, among them Richard Artschwager, Susan Rothenberg, and Raphael Soyer. Through Saturday, Nov. 23. (Tilton, 24 W. 57th St.)

NORMAN LEWIS (1909-79)—Abstract paintings. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Ross, 162 W. 56th St.)

JACQUES LIPCHITZ (1891-1973) / **CLAUDIO BRAVO**—A retrospective of sculptures, reliefs, and drawings. / Pastel still-lifes. Through Dec. 3. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

MELISSA MILLER / WILLIAM WEGMAN—Paintings and works on paper of animals. / Large-format Polaroids of Miami. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)—Ceramics done in collaboration with Josep Llorens Artigas. Through Dec. 7. (Matisse, 41 E. 57th St.) . . . ¶ Lithographs and etchings. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Rolly-Michaux, 943 Madison Ave., at 75th St.)

HENRY MOORE—Sculptures, drawings, and prints. Through Friday, Nov. 29. (Dorsky, 58 W. 58th St. Open Mondays.)

ISAMU NOGUCHI—Bronze sculptures dating from 1959 to 1962. Through Dec. 14. (Herstand, 24 W. 57th St.)

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KENNETH NOLAND / JOHN GRAHAM (1881-1961)—Paintings from the sixties, when he concentrated on chevrons and horizontal stripes. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. / Portrait drawings. Through Saturday, Nov. 23. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

ANNETTE OKO—Paintings of upper West Side storefronts. Through Dec. 14. (Zarre, 41 E. 57th St.)

BLINKY PALERMO (1943-77)—Non-representational paintings, some on aluminum panels, and drawings. Through Saturday, Nov. 23. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St.)

EDDA RENOUF / DAVID DEUTSCH—Abstract paintings and drawings. Through Tuesday, Nov. 26. / Long, narrow landscapes done on noticeably concave-shaped canvases. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

ANNE RYAN (1889-1954)—Collages made up of the delicate bits and pieces she doted on—scraps of fabric, thread, feathers. Through Dec. 21. (At both Washburn galleries, 42 E. 57th St. and 113 Greene St.)

LIVIO SAGANIĆ—Sculptures in which architectural recesses (stairways and intricate passages) are carved into the sides of rough slabs of slate. Through Dec. 4. (Armstrong, 50 W. 57th St.)

JOHN SEERY—Flower paintings by an Expressionist. Through Dec. 7. (Gruenebaum, 38 E. 57th St.)

JANET STAYTON—A two-gallery exhibit of paintings. (Heesy, 50 W. 57th St. Through Dec. 14. . . . ¶ 112 Greene Street Gallery. Through Dec. 7; open Sundays.) . . . ¶ Also, prints and monotypes by the artist at the Associated American Artists, 20 W. 57th St. Through Tuesday, Nov. 26.

GEORGE STUBBS (1724-1806)—Etchings: horses, of course, but also lions, sleepy-looking tigers, leopards, and anatomical drawings of nude male figures and a plucked rooster. Through Dec. 28. (Donson, 24 W. 57th St.)

WILLIAM THON—Paintings of Italy. Through Dec. 7. (Midtown, 11 E. 57th St.)

WILLIAM TUCKER—Three large bronzes (abstractions, but obviously inspired by gymnasts' movements) and their preparatory charcoal drawings. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (McKee, 41 E. 57th St.)

JEROME WITKIN—Realist narrative paintings, one of them the artist's version of his father leaving home for good, seen off by a bowl of spaghetti flung by his mother. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (French, 41 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

TAKAKO YAMAGUCHI—New paintings on paper. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Markel, 50 W. 57th St.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **MARISA DEL RE,** 41 E. 57th St.: Abstract paintings from the fifties by American artists, among them Helen Frankenthaler, Mark Rothko, Barnett Newman, Frank Stella, and Clyfford Still. Through Dec. 21. . . . **KENNEDY,** 40 W. 57th St.: Twenty-four American paintings, the earliest completed in 1763 by John Singleton Copley and the most recent, by Jack Levine, this year. Through Dec. 7. . . . **SCHOELKOPF,** 50 W. 57th St.: "American Wood Carvers," a show that juxtaposes ships' figureheads by commercial artists and contemporary sculptures by such artists as Elie Nadelman, Louise Kruger, and Raoul Hague. Through Dec. 4.

GALLERIES—SoHo

CALVIN ALBERT—Abstract terra-cotta sculptures and charcoal drawings. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Ingber, 415 West Broadway.)

DOUG ANDERSON—Abstraction and recognizable objects collide in heavily textured paintings. First one-man show in New York. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Kind, 136 Greene St.)

ROBERT BARNES—A retrospective of paintings. Through Dec. 29. (Artists' Choice, 394 West Broadway. Open Sundays.)

WENDELL CASTLE—Thirteen working long-case wood clocks, inlaid with silver and mother-of-pearl. Through Dec. 20. (Milliken, 98 Prince St.)

DALE CHIHULY—New glass sculptures. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Cowles, 420 West Broadway.)

ELAINE LUSTIG COHEN / CANDIDA ALVAREZ—Large paintings of lively geometric abstractions, plus wood constructions and works on paper. / Works on paper, sometimes collaged, dealing with the mores of Spanish Harlem. Through Saturday, Nov. 23. (Exit Art, 578 Broadway. Opens at noon.)

CHUCK CONNELLY—Paintings. Through Dec. 12. (Nosei, 100 Prince St.)

RENÉ DANIELS—Paintings of pictures on the walls of a gallery, simplified almost to the point of abstraction. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

NORRIS EMBRY (1921-81) / **SHERRY MARKOVITZ**—Expressionist paintings in mixed mediums. / Life-size papier-mâché heads (cast from taxidermists' models) of deer, a bear, and a cat, completely covered with beads, shells, and jewelry. Through Dec. 3. (Knowlton, 153 Mercer St.)

RAFAEL FERRER—Paintings of frolicking figures on tropical beaches, a cockfight, girls wrestling, and so on. Through Dec. 11. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

JOEL FISHER—Abstract sculptures in mixed mediums and the drawings from which they derived. Through Dec. 7. (Brown, 100 Greene St.)

HAMISH FULTON—The artist says his works (photographs with texts) are "about the experience of walking." Through Saturday, Nov. 23. (Weber, 142 Greene St.)

SONIA GECHTOFF—A survey of paintings and works on paper from the past thirty years. Through Dec. 7. (Gruenebaum, 415 West Broadway.)

STEVE GIANAKOS—Large paintings of comic-strip images complete with captions. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Toll, 146 Greene St.)

KEITH HARING—Two shows of his rambunctious cartoon characters. Paintings on large, unstretched canvas, through Saturday, Nov. 30, at Shafrazi, 163 Mercer St., and four massive steel and aluminum sculptures in bright colors, through Saturday, Nov. 23, at Castelli, 142 Greene St., where the artist has painted the walls to look like a playground.

CHRISTOPHER JAMES—Very wet-looking watercolors of women submerged in swimming pools, one in a Budapest bathhouse. Through Dec. 7. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

DAVID KELLEY—Scraggly abstract shapes painted on linoleum and Masonite. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Munroe, 415 West Broadway.)

PENNY KRONENGOLD—Semi-abstract treatments of views from the artist's window in New York. Through Wednesday, Nov. 27. (First Street Gallery, 386 West Broadway. Open Sundays.)

LES LEVEQUE—Two installations; one is called "Reflections on Terrorism" and consists of stones, mirrors, and text. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (14 Sculptors, 164 Mercer St. Open Sundays.)

LI-LAN / MATTIE BERHANG—Paintings of blank business forms (invoices, memo pads, receipts) in arrangements that evoke Mondrian. / Large, airy mobiles made of small found objects strung on almost invisible

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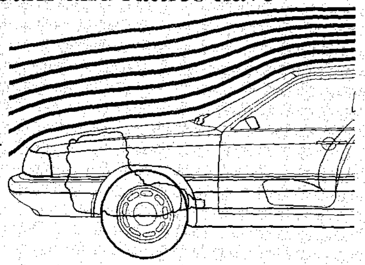

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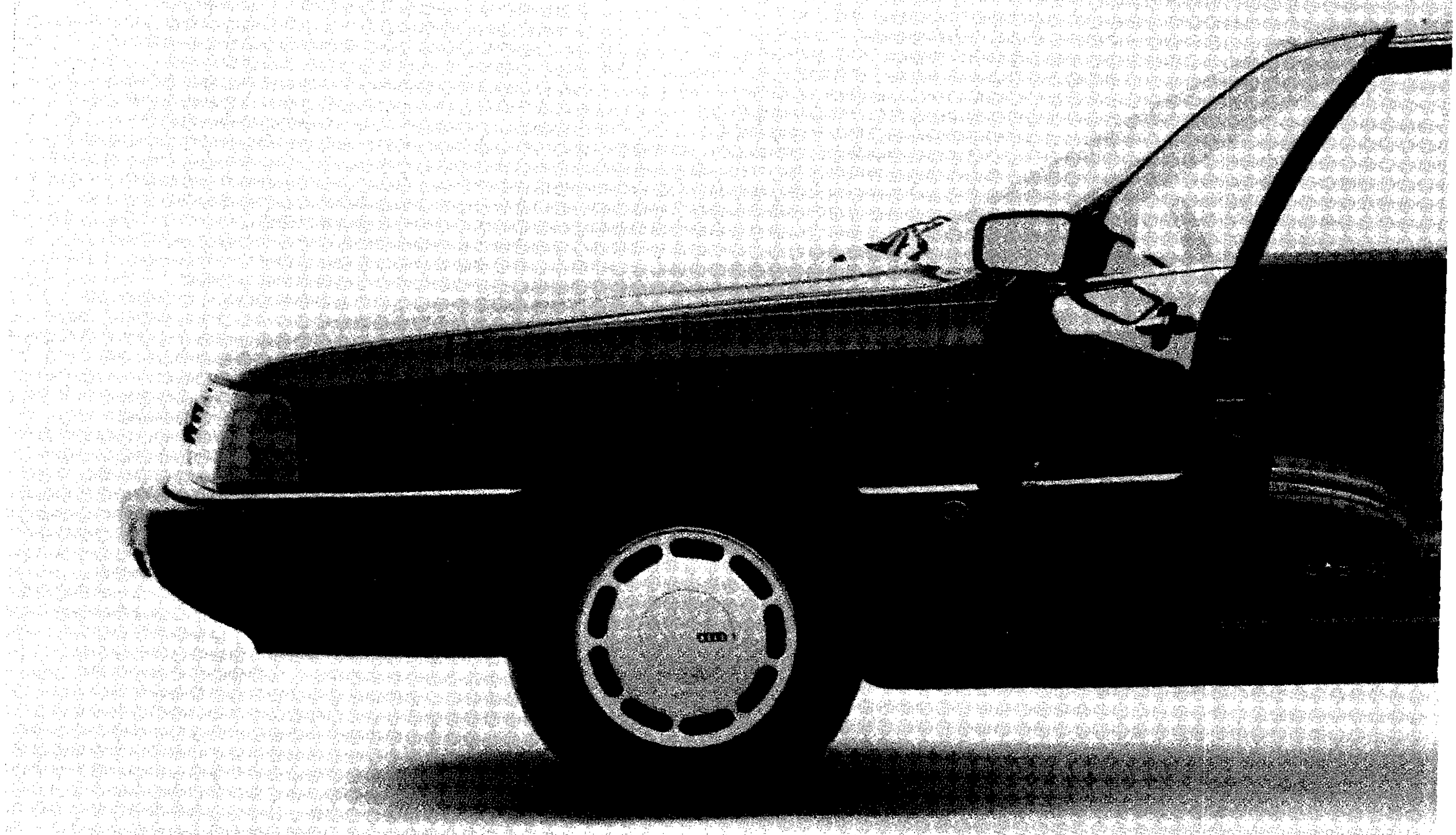

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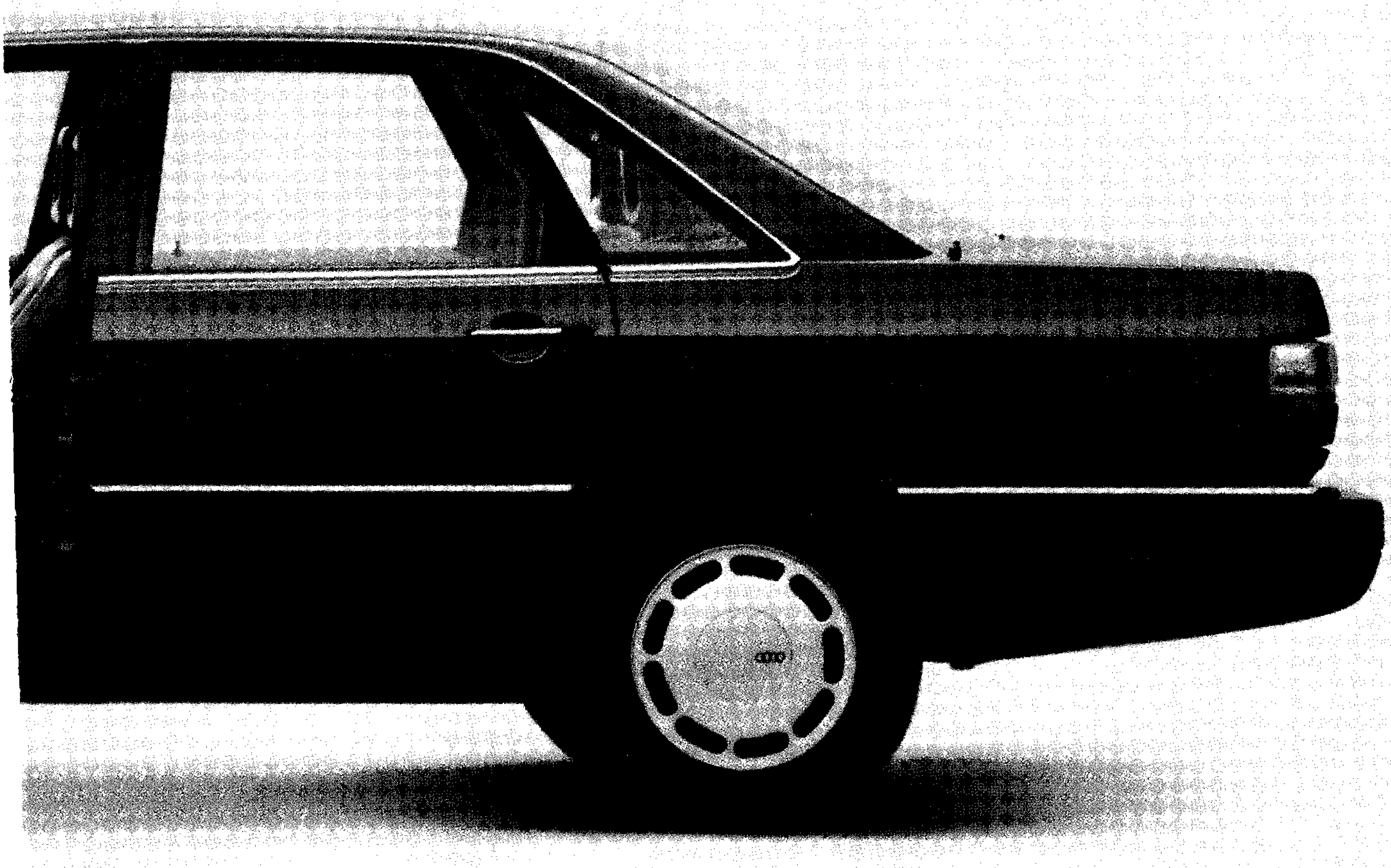

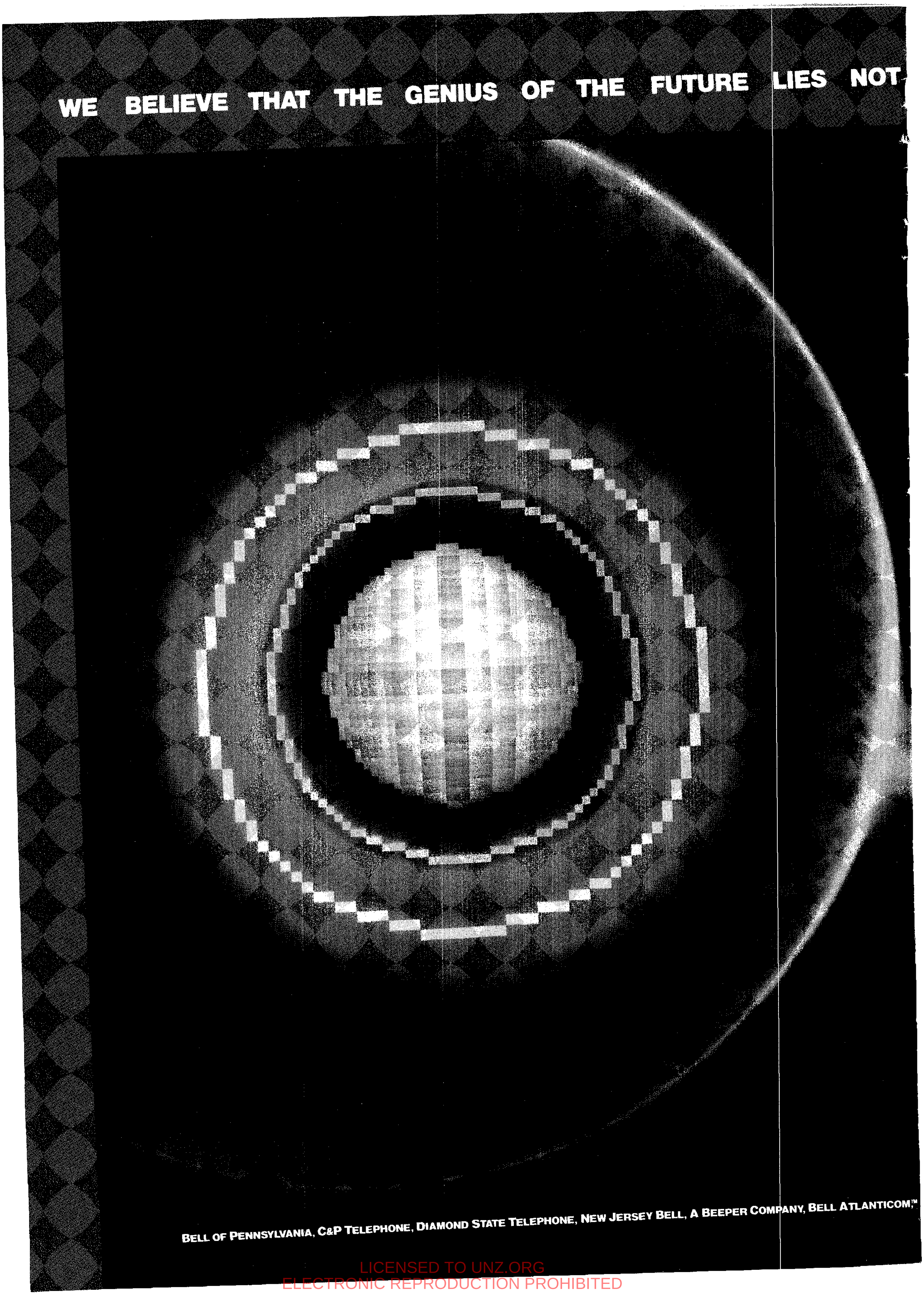
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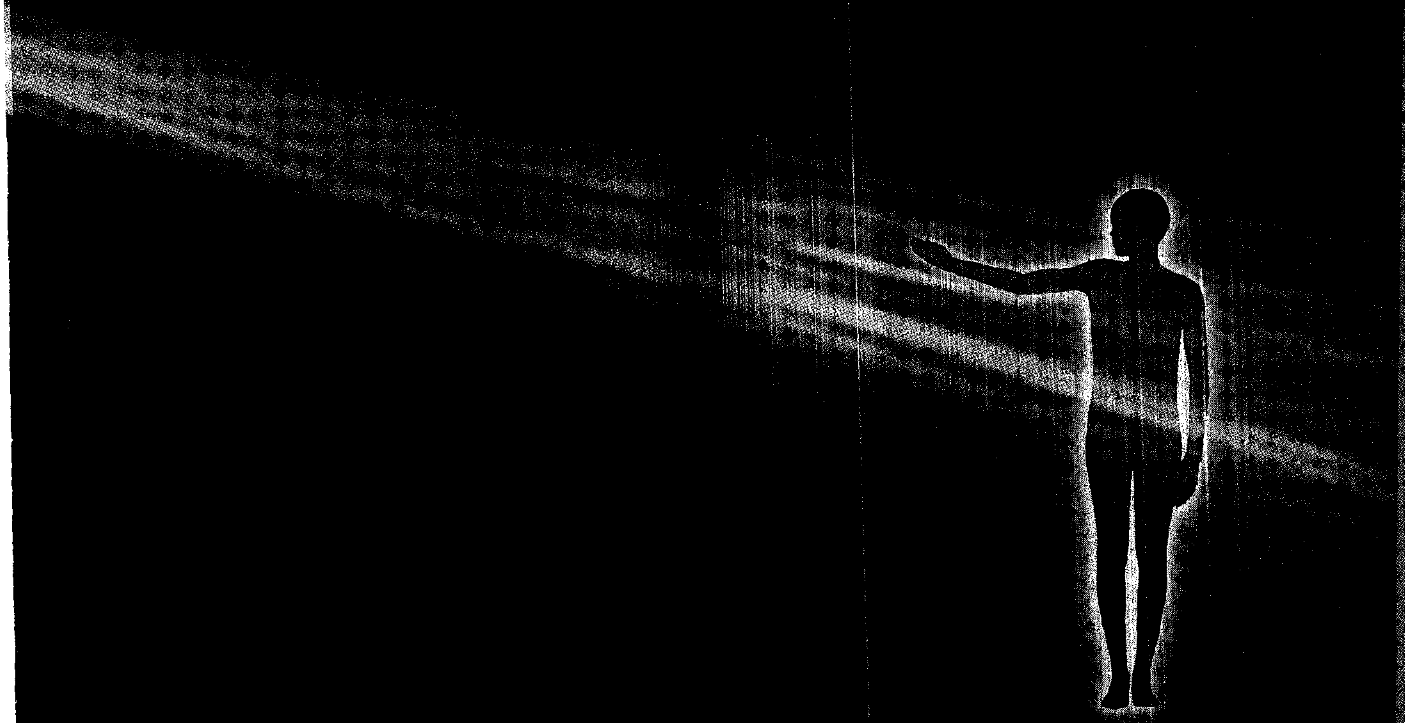

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Steve & Sharyn
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threads. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (O.K. Harris, 383 West Broadway.)

Sylvia Plimack Mangold—New paintings. Through Dec. 7. (Alexander, 59 Wooster St.)

Jakob Mattner—Glass rectangles, discs, and slivers set into a white wall and impeccably lighted so that shadows become part of the sculptures. Through Dec. 28. (Carpenter+Hochman, 420 West Broadway.)

Mario Merz—This Arte Povera artist is showing, among other works, a large canvas in mixed mediums centered on a stuffed iguana. Through Dec. 21. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

Eduardo Oliveira Cézar—Monochromatic paintings of shadowy stairways. Through Dec. 1. (Littlejohn-Smith, 133 Greene St. Open Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Kingsley Parker—Metaphorical paintings. Through Saturday, Nov. 23. (Condeso-Lawler, 76 Greene St.)

Clayton Patterson—Small, figurative watercolors. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Herlin, 68 Thompson St. Open Mondays.)

A. R. Penck—Primitive stick figures are intermingled with deer, skulls, spears, and other totemic items in these large new paintings. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

Jonathan Santlofer—Shaped abstract paintings, with some sections cut out and loosely fitted back in, so that they are deliberately out of alignment with the main picture plane. Through Wednesday, Nov. 27. (Pam Adler, 578 Broadway.)

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith—Symbolic paintings combining abstraction and figuration. Through Dec. 3. (Steinbaum, 132 Greene St.)

Sculpture—Stone pieces by about twenty artists, Louise Bourgeois, William Zorach, and Barbara Hepworth among them. Through Dec. 21. (Thorp, 103 Prince St.)

OTHER GALLERIES

Fabio Cresci—Paintings using vegetable colors the artist made. Through Dec. 11. (Ala, 32 W. 20th St.)

Judy Glantzman—Paintings of muscular figures done on Plexiglas and Masonite, with cutouts of similar muscular figures attached to them. Through Sunday, Nov. 24. (Gracie Mansion Gallery, 167 Avenue A, at 10th St. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Marvin Israel—Expressionist portraits and nudes. Through Dec. 7. (Gallery Lafayette, 430 Lafayette St. Tuesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 7.)

Lee Jaffe—Constructions made from found objects, including fur pelts that are used in a piece called "What Becomes a Legend Most." Through Dec. 7. (Stoler, 13 White St.)

Arte Povera—Organized by Germano Celant, the critic who invented the term, this is the first full-scale show in this country given to an Italian art movement that is roughly analogous to Minimalism and Conceptualism. The works of twelve artists occupy every available space of P.S. 1. Through Dec. 15. (46-01 21st St., Long Island City. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Group Shows—At the **good,** 39 Great Jones St.: Abstract paintings by Moira Dryer, Marilyn Lerner, and Christopher Lucas. Through Dec. 21. . . . **gorney,** 204 E. 10th St.: Geometric paintings by John McLaughlin, Harvey Quaytman, and Andrew Spence. Through Dec. 1. (Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Jan Groover—Still-lifes. Through Saturday, Nov. 23. (Robert Miller, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Florence Henri (1893-1983)—More than fifty prints, including still-lifes and portraits (of Kandinsky and Arp, among others). Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Wolf, 30 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

William Klein—People at the beach seen very close up, backstage views of Paris fashion shows, and street scenes. Through Saturday, Nov. 23. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Hiroji Kubota—Prints of China (a few enlarged to mural size) by a Japanese photojournalist. Through Jan. 5. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

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Joel Meyerowitz—"A Summer's Day" is the title for a show of beach scenes mounted by the Brooklyn Museum. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

Richard Prince—New work by an artist whose photographs are of newspaper and magazine pictures. Through Dec. 1. (International with Monument, 111 E. 7th St. Opens daily, except Mondays, at noon.)

Albert Renger-Patzsch (1892-1966)—Photographs of plants. Through Dec. 7. (Ledel, 168 Mercer St. Opens at noon.)

Golden Age of British Photography, 1839-1900—The Morgan Library has mounted a show of more than two hundred photographs from the Victoria & Albert Museum. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

Group Shows—At **the museum of modern art,** 11 W. 53rd St.: A selection of self-portraits, from the wet-plate era right up to Polaroids, by more than forty photographers (Nadar, Stieglitz, Outerbridge, Ray, Wegman, Samaras, Sherman). See below, under "Museums," for dates and times. . . . **303 gallery,** 303 Park Ave. S., at 23rd St.: Works by Jeff Koons, James Casebere, and Larry Johnson. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Opens at 1.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A gilded French rococo carriage, decorated with paintings from the studio of Boucher, and Rubens' monumental painting "The Assumption of the Virgin" set the tone of an elaborate show of art works acquired or commissioned by the Princes of Liechtenstein between the sixteenth century and the nineteenth. Ornate firearms in the collection occupy one gallery. . . . ¶ A seventeenth-century imperial Mughal tent is the centerpiece of a wide-ranging exhibition of Indian art, numbering more than three hundred objects of religious and secular derivation. Through Jan. 5. (Open daily except Mondays and Thanksgiving Day. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—An exhibit of lithographs and posters, mainly, by Toulouse-Lautrec, all from his last ten years. Through Jan. 26. A complementary show is at the French Embassy, 972 Fifth Ave., at 78th St. . . . ¶ The Riklis collection of geometric abstract paintings, drawings, and sculptures has come the museum's way, and selections from it are the nucleus of an exhibit that follows this aspect of abstraction from European Cubism and Constructivism right up to American Minimalism. Through Jan. 7. . . . **photography:** A show of nineteenth- and twentieth-century self-portraits. Through Jan. 7. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings—except Thanksgiving, when it will close at 5—until 9.)

Eve Olitsky

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A show of about a hundred and twenty-five sculptures representing the different styles used by American and European artists since the forties. Starts Friday, Nov. 22. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—An exhibit that examines American decorative and industrial design in this century, with examples extending from a Frank Lloyd Wright dining set, never exhibited before, to an Apple IIc personal computer. Through Feb. 16. . . . ¶ A Ralston Crawford (1906-78) retrospective includes paintings, drawings, photographs, and lithographs. Through Feb. 2. (Open daily except Mondays and Thanksgiving Day. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—A retrospective of Jennifer Bartlett's work includes large-scale paintings, sculptures of objects seen in the paintings, drawings, and models for architectural commissions. Starts Friday, Nov. 22. . . . ¶ Sixty sculptures by ten artists who have their studios in Brooklyn, among them Judy Pfaff and Ray Rapp. Through Jan. 6. . . . **photography:** Prints by Joel Meyerowitz. Through Jan. 13. (Open daily except Tuesdays and Thanksgiving Day. Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—Architectural drawings and photographs of the archeological site of Vijayanagara, one of the best-preserved Hindu ruins of ancient India. Through Jan. 26. (Open daily except Thanksgiving Day. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, Broadway at 155th St.—Paintings and drawings by more than fifty contemporary artists are on display in the annual Childe Hassam and Eugene Speicher Purchase Fund show; some of the works will be bought by the Academy/Institute as gifts to museums. . . . ¶ A memorial exhibition of paintings by Ivan Albright, Alice Neel, and Jimmy Ernst, and prints by Armin Landeck. Both shows through Dec. 15. (Open daily, except Mondays and Thanksgiving Day, 1 to 4.)

Asia Society, 725 Park Ave., at 70th St.—Paintings, illustrated manuscripts, carpets, and other works from a productive period in Indian art masterminded by the sixteenth-century Mughal emperor Akbar. Through Jan. 5. (Open daily except Mondays and Thanksgiving Day. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

China Institute, 125 E. 65th St.—Rocks (lapis lazuli, soapstone, malachite) and paintings depicting rocks (on hand-scrolls, hanging scrolls, album leaves, fans) in a show underscoring the significance of the rock in Chinese culture. Through Jan. 26. (Open daily except Thanksgiving Day. Hours: Mondays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, 2 to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—An exhibit of modern Finnish glass. Through Jan. 5. (Open daily except Mondays and Thanksgiving Day. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—A show concerning the Ingres portrait of Comtesse d'Haussonville painted between 1842 and 1845. With the work as the focal point, the exhibit examines and documents other elements of the painting; everything from the porcelains seen in the portrait to memorabilia of the Countess to preparatory studies for the portrait. Through Feb. 16. (Open daily except Mondays and Thanksgiving Day. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Grolier Club, 47 E. 60th St.—Ezra Pound (born October 30, 1885) and his life's work are the topic of a show of first editions, auto-

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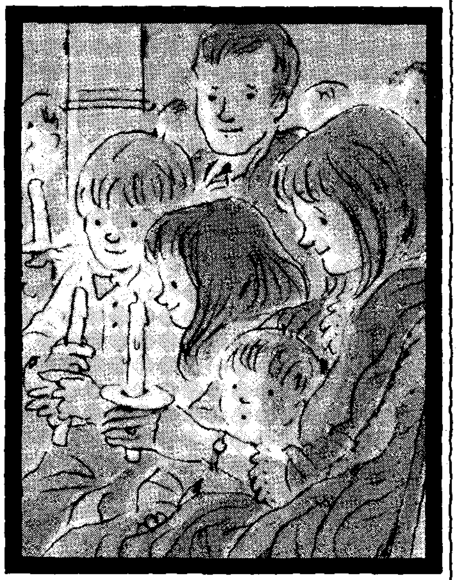

Peter Spier's books aren't "children's books" at all; they're simple masterpieces that display the elegant economy of poetry, that depict a vivid world in all its colorful immediacy. They are not at all child*ish;* rather, child*like,* with all the freshness, wonder and delight the word implies.

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In others of his books, a few well-chosen words speak of the universal, the primary, the classic. To explore *People* with a child is to realize again how varied, how unique, how human we *all* are—and what that community means. *The Book of Jonah,* Peter Spier's newest book, captures the spirit of the classic tale of Jonah and the whale in a way that is graceful and new. Spier's *Little Animal* books celebrate the miracle of nature.

His first book, *The Fox Went Out on a Chilly Night,* was a Caldecott Honor Book more than twenty years ago, and Peter Spier has won many prizes since then—the Caldecott Medal and the Christopher Award, to name only two. But any parent can tell you that the only accolade that counts is the shining face of a child, and of these he has won many more than most. Deservedly.

L.L. Day
Editor-at-Large

DOUBLEDAY publishes Peter Spier. His work is available at all Doubleday Book Shops and other fine booksellers.

graph manuscripts, poems by authors he edited, and even carbon copies of the scripts for two of the radio broadcasts he made in Italy. Through Saturday, Nov. 30. (Open daily, except Sundays and Thanksgiving Day, 10 to 5.)

Japan House, 333 E. 47th St.—A display of seventy-six *kawari kabuto,* Japanese helmets worn by warlords between the sixteenth century and the nineteenth and distinguished not so much by their protective capacity as by their daring, highly individualistic designs: a crouching rabbit, a boy's topknot, a morning glory, and so forth. Through Wednesday, Nov. 27. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—An exhibit of paintings, drawings, and sculptures by the community of immigrant Jewish artists who moved to the Montparnasse section of Paris in the first half of this century: Chagall, Modigliani, Zadkine, Sonia Delaunay, and others. Through Feb. 2. (Open daily except Fridays, Saturdays, and Thanksgiving Day. Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—Letters and manuscripts penned by Mark Twain and Bret Harte, plus first-edition copies of some of their works, are on view in recognition of the authors' hundred-and-fiftieth anniversaries. Through January 26. . . . **PHOTOGRAPHY:** Nineteenth-century British artists. Through Feb. 2. (Open daily except Mondays and Thanksgiving Day. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—A display of fifty seventeenth-century Dutch paintings, by Rembrandt, Jan Steen, Aelbert Cuyp, and others, on loan from the Bredius Museum in the Netherlands. Through Jan. 5. . . . ¶ A show devoted to watercolors by the nineteenth-century painter Jasper Cropsey, a number depicting the landscape of Hastings-on-Hudson. Through Jan. 19. (Open daily except Mondays and Thanksgiving Day. Hours: Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—Frederic Remington's impressions (paintings and sketches) of northern New York State, where he was born, done at the same time as the Western illustrations that earned him his reputation. Through Jan. 11. (Open daily except Mondays and Thanksgiving Day. Hours: Tuesdays through Fridays, 11 to 5; Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

ART AFTER DARK

(Performance, music, dance, video, film, and combinations thereof.)

Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077—Mimi Goese (dance), Fridays and Saturdays, Nov. 22-23 and 29-30, at 11.

P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288—Nina Martin (dance), Fridays through Sundays, Nov. 22-24 and Nov. 29-Dec. 1, at 9.

MUSIC

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; for Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St., 570-3949; and for Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 427-4410. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Wednesday, Nov. 20, at 8: "Porgy and Bess," with Roberta Alexander, Myra Merritt, Karen Williams, Charles Williams, and Michael Smartt; conducted by James Levine. . . . ¶ Thursday, Nov. 21, at 8: "La Traviata," with Rosario Andrade, Luis Lima, and Leo Nucci; Thomas Fulton. . . . ¶ Friday, Nov. 22, at 7:30: A new production of Mozart's "Le Nozze di Figaro," with Carol Vaness, Kathleen Battle, Frederica von Stade, Thomas Allen, and Ruggero Raimondi; James Levine. (A benefit performance.) . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 23, at 2: "Porgy and Bess," with Roberta Alexander, Myra Merritt, Karen Williams, Charles Williams, and Michael Smartt; James Levine. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 23, at 8: "Cavalleria Rusticana," with Mignon Dunn, Isola Jones, and Vasile Moldoveanu; and "Pagliacci," with Mariana Nicolesco, Jon Vickers, and Sherrill Milnes. Garcia Navarro conducting both. . . . ¶ Monday, Nov. 25, at 8: "Le Nozze di Figaro," with Carol Vaness, Kathleen Battle, Frederica von Stade, Thomas Allen, and Ruggero Raimondi; James Levine. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Nov. 26, at 8: "Porgy and Bess," with Roberta Alexander, Gwendolyn Bradley, Karen Williams, Bernard Thacker, and Michael Smartt; James Levine. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Nov. 27, at 8: "Cavalleria Rusticana," with Hildegard Behrens, Isola Jones, and Vladimir Popov; and "Pagliacci," with Mariana Nicolesco, Jon Vickers, and Sherrill Milnes. Garcia Navarro conducting both. . . . ¶ Thursday, Nov. 28, at 8: "Le Nozze di Figaro," with Carol Vaness, Kathleen Battle, Frederica von Stade, Thomas Allen, and Ruggero Raimondi; James Levine. . . . ¶ Friday, Nov. 29, at 8: The Erik Satie ballet "Parade," with Gary Chryst and the Metropolitan Opera Ballet; Poulenc's opera "Les Mamelles de Tirésias," with Barbara Daniels, David Holloway, and Allan Monk; and Ravel's opera "L'Enfant et les Sortilèges," with Marvis Martin, Gwendolyn Bradley, and Hilda Harris. Manuel Rosenthal will be the conductor for all three works. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 30, at 2: "Porgy and Bess," with Roberta Alexander, Gwendolyn Bradley, Karen Williams, Bernard Thacker, and Simon Estes; James Levine. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 30, at 8: "Cavalleria Rusticana," with Hildegard Behrens, Isola Jones, and Vladimir Popov; and "Pagliacci," with Mariana Nicolesco, Jon Vickers, and Sherrill Milnes. Garcia Navarro conducting both.

Opera Ensemble of New York—Michael Recchiuti conducting performances of Robert Ward's "The Crucible," an opera based on the play by Arthur Miller. Staged by John J. D. Sheehan. (Lillie Blake School Theatre, 45 E. 81st St. Wednesday, Nov. 20, and Friday, Nov. 22, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 24, at 3. For information about tickets, call 288-1485.)

Juilliard American Opera Center—Benefit performances of works by William Schuman, honoring his seventy-fifth birthday. With the Juilliard Symphony conducted by Ronald Braunstein. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Friday, Nov. 22, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 24, at 3. For information about tickets, call 874-7515, Wednesday through Friday from 9:30 to 5:30.)

Amato Opera Company—Mozart's "The Marriage of Figaro," in English. (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Saturdays at 7:30 and Sundays at 2:30.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall—Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 21-23, at 8, and Tuesday, Nov. 26, at 7:30: Zubin Mehta conducting a varied program, with Wynton Marsalis and Philip Smith, trumpet. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Nov. 27, at 8; Friday, Nov. 29, at 2; Saturday, Nov. 30, at 8; and Tuesday, Dec. 3, at 7:30: Leonard Bernstein conducting a performance of Mahler's Seventh Symphony.

American Symphony Orchestra—Leonard Slatkin conducting, with Mark Peskanov, violin. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, Nov. 24, at 3.)

Orchestre du Capitole de Toulouse—Michel Plasson conducting a program of French music, with Katia and Marielle Labèque, duo-piano. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, Nov. 24, at 8.)

Manhattan Philharmonia—Patrick Flynn conducting. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, 120 Claremont Ave., at 122nd St. Friday, Nov. 22, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Y Chamber Symphony—Maxim Shostakovich conducting, with Nadia Pelle, soprano; Gretchen Greenfield, mezzo-soprano; David Gordon, tenor; Jonathan Haas, timpani; and Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, violin. (Kaufmann Concert Hall. Saturday, Nov. 23, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 24, at 3.)

"Anna Bolena"—Richard Bonynge directing the

New York City Opera Orchestra in a concert version of the Donizetti opera, with Joan Sutherland and Cynthia Clarey, sopranos; Judith Forst, mezzo-soprano; Jerry Hadley and Gran Wilson, tenors; Greg Yurisch, baritone; and the New York Choral Artists. (Avery Fisher Hall. Monday, Nov. 25, at 8.)

Philharmonia Virtuosi—Richard Kapp conducting a program that includes a performance of Virgil Thomson's score for, and a screening of, the 1937 documentary film "The River," with Peter Jennings acting as narrator. The second in a series of five concerts. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Tuesday, Nov. 26, at 8.)

Collegiate Chorale—Robert Bass directing a performance of Dvořák's "Stabat Mater," with Julia Faulkner, soprano; Kimball Wheeler, mezzo-soprano; Vinson Cole, tenor; and Arthur Woodley, bass-baritone. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, Nov. 23, at 8.)

Choral Symphony Society—David Labovitz directing a concert version of Mozart's "Die Zauberflöte," with Linda Seay, soprano; Beverly Hoch, mezzo-soprano; Alburtt Rhodes, tenor; and Arthur Burrows, baritone. The second in a series of three concerts. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Sunday, Nov. 24, at 3.)

RECITALS

Waverly Consort—A program of Elizabethan and Jacobean music. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium. Thursday, Nov. 21, at 8.)

Concert Royal—James Richman playing the harpsichord and conducting, with dancer Catherine Turocy. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Thursday, Nov. 21, at 8.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—With Josef Suk, violin; Steven Tenenbom, viola; Jean-Yves Thibaudet, piano; Robert Routch, horn; and members of the Society. (Alice Tully Hall. Friday, Nov. 22, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 24, at 5.)

Mozartean Players—A Haydn-Mozart-Beethoven program. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium. Friday, Nov. 22, at 8.)

Composers' Forum—A program of premières performed by the Kronos Quartet. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Friday, Nov. 22, at 8.)

North / South Consonance—Premières of compositions by Latin Americans. (Center for Inter-American Relations, 680 Park Ave., at 68th St. Friday, Nov. 22, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Pomerium Musices and the New York Consort of Viols—A joint program of sixteenth-century music from Naples, with Charles Sherman, harpsichord. (Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, Fifth Ave. at 55th St. Sunday, Nov. 24, at 2. Admission by contribution.)

Music Before 1800—The third in a series of programs, this one performed by the Classical Quartet, with Stephen Hammer, oboe. (Corpus Christi Church, 529 W. 121st St. Sunday, Nov. 24, at 3. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

Martha Braden—Piano. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Sunday, Nov. 24, at 8.)

Alan Mandel—Piano. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Sunday, Nov. 24, at 8:30.)

Henryk Szeryng—Violin. (Carnegie Hall. Monday, Nov. 25, at 8.)

Joseph Wytko—Saxophone, in a program of twentieth-century music. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Tuesday, Nov. 26, at 8.)

Da Capo Chamber Players—With Lucy Shelton, soprano. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Tuesday, Nov. 26, at 8. Composers Stephen Albert and James Greeson will participate in a post-concert discussion.)

American Festival of Microtonal Music—Johnny Reinhard directing. (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. Tuesday, Nov. 26, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Andrius Kuprevicius—Piano. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Saturday, Nov. 30, at 5:30.)

Peter Serkin—Piano. (Kaufmann Concert Hall. Saturday, Nov. 30, at 8.)

MISCELLANY

Fires of London—At Alice Tully Hall—Friday, and Saturday, Nov. 29-30, at 8, and Sunday, Dec. 1, at 2:30: The New York première of a fully staged version of Peter Maxwell Davies' chamber opera "The Lighthouse." . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 30, at 2:30: "Le Jongleur de Notre Dame" and "Eight Songs for a Mad King." . . . ¶ Sunday, Dec. 1, at 7:30: "Miss Dunnithorne's Maggot" and "Vesalii Icones."

Next Wave Festival—At the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the third annual presentation of a series of programs of contemporary works of dance, theatre, music, and visual effects. In the **carey playhouse**—Wednesday, Nov. 20, at 7; Thursday, through Saturday, Nov. 21-23, at 8; and Sunday, Nov. 24, at 2 and 7: **bob berky** and **michael moschen** in a full-length work, "The Alchemedians." . . . ¶ Friday and Saturday, Nov. 29-30, at 8: The **love of life orchestra**, conducted by Peter Gordon. . . . **lepercq space**—Wednesday through Saturday, Nov. 20-23, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 24, at 2: Chris Hardman's Antenna Theatre performing his work **russia**. (30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Through Sunday, Dec. 8.)

"The Second Hurricane"—Performances of a play-opera by Aaron Copland. Staged by Tazewell Thompson. (Henry Street Settlement's New Federal Theatre, 466 Grand St. 598-0400. Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 21-23, at 7:30; Sundays, Nov. 24 and Dec. 1, at 3; and Friday and Saturday, Nov. 29-30, at 7:30.)

SPORTS

(The box-office number for Madison Square Garden is 564-4400.)

Professional Basketball—At **madison square garden**: Knicks vs. Boston, Saturday, Nov. 23, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Philadelphia, Saturday, Nov. 30, at 7:30. . . . **byrne meadowlands arena** (1-201 935-8888): Nets vs. Philadelphia, Wednesday, Nov. 27, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Atlanta, Friday, Nov. 29, at 7:30.

Professional Football—Jets vs. New England Patriots. (Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands. Sunday, Nov. 24, at 1.)

Hockey—At **madison square garden** (all games at 7:35): Rangers vs. Toronto Maple Leafs, Wednesday, Nov. 20. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Islanders, Sunday, Nov. 24. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Calgary Flames, Wednesday, Nov. 27. . . . **nassau coliseum**: Islanders vs. Rangers, Saturday, Nov. 23, at 7:05. (Hempstead Turnpike, Uniondale, L.I. 1-516 794-9100.) . . . **byrne meadowlands arena** (1-201 935-3900): Devils vs. Winnipeg Jets, Tuesday, Nov. 26, at 7:35. . . . ¶ Devils vs. Washington Capitals, Saturday, Nov. 30, at 7:35.

Racing—At **aqueduct**: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 12:30. Post time will be 11 A.M. on Thanksgiving Day. The Remsen, Saturday, Nov. 23; the Demoiselle, Sunday, Nov. 24; and the Queens County Handicap, Thursday, Nov. 28. . . . **meadowlands**: Weeknights, except Thanksgiving, at 8; through Tuesday, Dec. 31.

ET ALIA

Poetry Readings—Richard Howard reading from the works of Alexander Pope. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Monday, Nov. 25, at 8.)

National Postage Stamp Show—The thirty-seventh annual exhibit will feature special showings by twenty-four governments. First-day issues will be put on sale by Sweden on Thursday, Nov. 21, and by the United Nations and Canada on Friday, Nov. 22. (Madison Square Garden Exposition Rotunda, Seventh Ave. at 32nd St. Thursday, Nov. 21, noon to 7; Friday, Nov. 22, from 11 to 7; Saturday, Nov. 23, from 10 to 6; and Sunday, Nov. 24, from 11 to 5.)

Flower Show—An exhibition of Japanese chrysanthemums, including bonsai plants, in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory at the New York Botanical Garden. (Bronx Park. Daily, 10 to 4; through Sunday, Dec. 1.)

Auctions—At Sotheby's, York Ave. at 72nd St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Thanksgiving Day, 10 to 5.) —Thursday, Nov. 21, at 10:15: Illustrated books and drawings. . . . ¶ Friday, Nov. 22, at 2, and Saturday, Nov. 23, at 10:15 and 2: European works of art, armor, furniture, and tapestries. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 23, at 2: Oriental carpets. . . . ¶ Monday, Nov. 25, at 2: Judaica. Exhibition starts Thursday, Nov. 21. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Nov. 26, at 10:15 and 2: Pre-Columbian art. Exhibition starts Thursday, Nov. 21. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Nov. 26, at 7, and Wednesday, Nov. 27, at 10:15: Latin-American paintings. Exhibition starts Thursday, Nov. 21.

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A THOROUGH EXPLANATION OF THE 16-VALVE SAAB 900 ENGINE.

This is for all those people who were not far-sighted enough to take Auto Shop as an elective in high school.

Where do we start? Well, let's begin with the familiar: the car you're presently driving.

The overwhelming odds are that for each cylinder your car has, it has two valves. One to let the fuel in and run the engine; the other to let the gases out after they've been burned.

Hence the rule: Make the valves bigger and you increase what's called the *volumetric* efficiency. (In plainer English, the larger the valve, the easier it is for gas to come in and exhaust to go out.)

Unfortunately, the bigger you make the valves, the farther away you move the spark plugs from the center of the combustion chamber. And that starts to wreck what's called the *thermal* efficiency.

The problem: How to increase one efficiency (the volumetric) without decreasing the other (the thermal).

Engineers had been solving that problem for years in their competition and rally cars. Instead of just making the valves bigger, they simply doubled the number of valves.

Each cylinder, then, gets two valves to ingest the fuel and two valves to throw off the exhaust.

Getting back to your car. If it has a four-cylinder engine, it probably has eight valves.

1986 SAAB 900S

Power output:	*125 HP/92 kw @ 5500 rpm*
Max. torque:	*123 ft. lbs./166 NM @ 3000 rpm*
Compression ratio:	*10.1:1*
Fuel injection:	*Bosch LH electronic*
Ignition:	*Bosch electronic with knock detector*

1986 SAAB 900 TURBO

Power output:	*160 HP/118 kw @ 5500 rpm*
Max. torque:	*188 ft. lbs./255 NM @ 3000 rpm*
Compression ratio:	*9.0:1*
Fuel injection:	*Bosch LH electronic*
Ignition:	*Bosch electronic, Hall effect*

Whereas a Saab 900S or Turbo (the descendants of rally and competition cars) has sixteen.

Back in the days of cheap gas and free glassware, none of this engineering cleverness was needed. (Well, it *was* needed; it just wasn't called for.)

All you had to do then was worry about performance (V-8 engines and the like) and throw efficiency to the wind.

Today, Saab throws nothing to the wind.

Engine weight: On a football field, 180-pound cornerbacks are faster than 290-pound defensive tackles. They have less weight to carry around. So, too, the four-cylinder, two-liter Saab engine block. Everything is attuned to keeping that weight down: The cylinder head, camshaft cover, and intake manifold are built from lightweight aluminum alloys instead of clunkier materials.

Fuel injection: The fuel is not burned mindlessly; the computer-like Bosch fuel injection always maintains the most efficient mixture of gas and air.

Even the stroke the piston makes is only this long:

3.07 inches. So hours and hours and hours and hours of high cruising speed don't create unnecessary wear and tear on the engine.

Saab offers both turbocharged and 16-valve naturally aspirated engines.

In the legendary Saab Turbo. And the not-yet-legendary new Saab 900S.

They prove that there are more ways than one to achieve what is more appropriate to poets than to engineers: the picture of driving exhilaration you see on the right.

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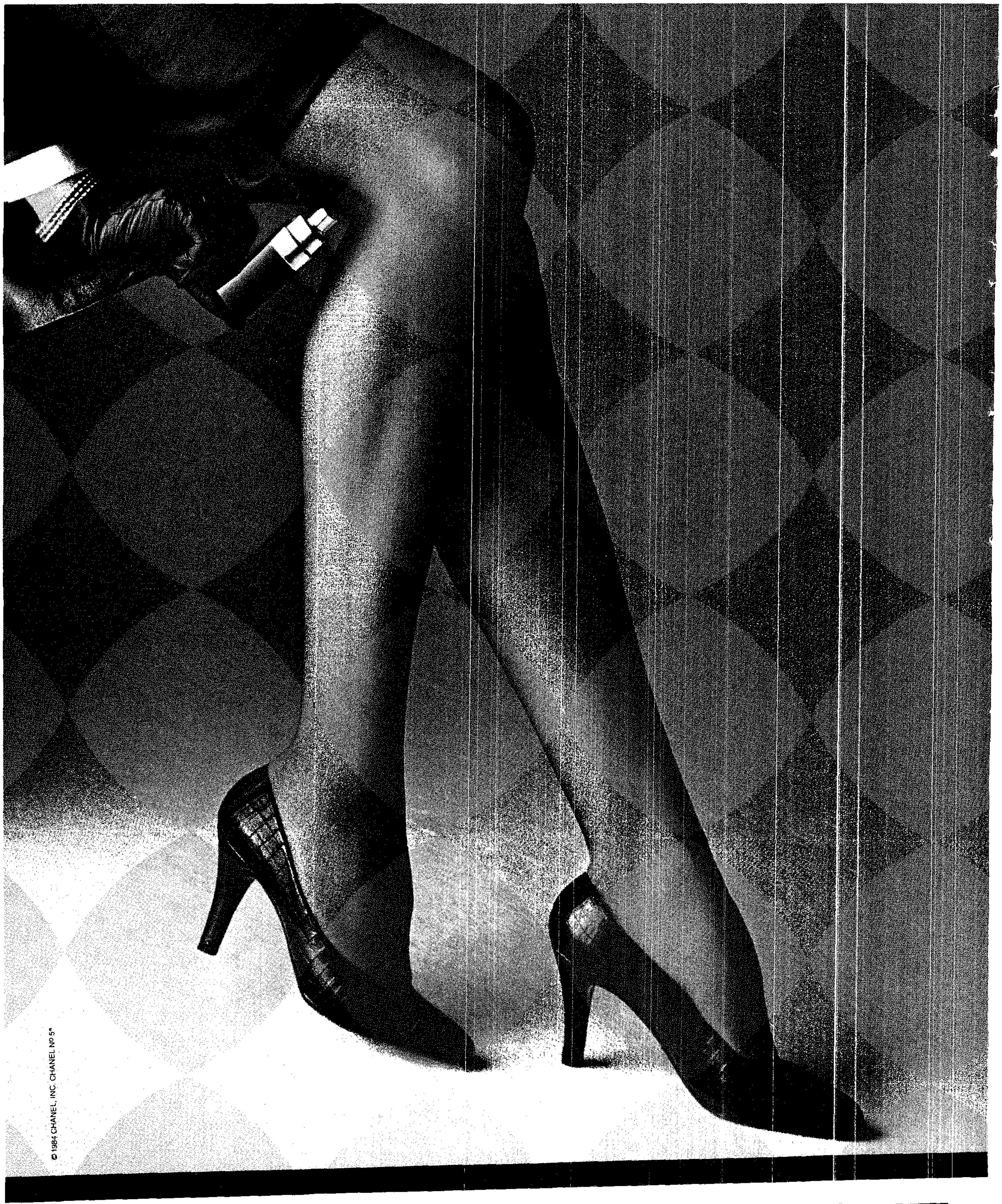
Saabs range in price from $12,285 for the 900 3-door 5-speed to $18,695 for the 900 3-door 5-speed, 16-valve Turbo. Manufacturer's suggested retail prices. Not including taxes, license, freight, dealer charges or options. There are a limited number of Turbo models available with Saab's Exclusive Appointments group, which includes: leather upholstery, fog lights, and electric sunroof at additional cost.

A MORE THOROUGH EXPLANATION.



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

EAST SIDE

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
Through Nov. 27: "Les Plouffe" (1982; directed by Gilles Carle; a Canadian film, in French). In addition, each night a second film by Mr. Carle will be shown.
Nov. 28: Theatre closed.
From Nov. 29: "Flowing" (1956; Mikio Naruse; in Japanese).

New Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"After Hours" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
Through Nov. 26: "Agnes of God" (Norman Jewison), with Jane Fonda, Anne Bancroft, and Meg Tilly.
From Nov. 27: "Santa Claus: The Movie" (Jeannot Szwarc), with Dudley Moore and John Lithgow.

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
"Target" (Arthur Penn), with Gene Hackman and Matt Dillon.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 21: "That Was Then . . . This Is Now" (Christopher Cain), with Emilio Estevez. From Nov. 22: "Fever Pitch" (Richard Brooks), with Ryan O'Neal.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 21: "TRansylvania 6-5000" (Rudy De Luca), with Jeff Goldblum and Joseph Bologna. From Nov. 22: To be announced.
Theatre 3: Through Nov. 26: "To Live and Die in L.A." (William Friedkin), with William L. Petersen and Willem Dafoe. From Nov. 27: "Rocky IV" (Sylvester Stallone), with Stallone, Talia Shire, Burt Young, and Carl Weathers.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Jagged Edge" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Back to the Future" (†).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"Target" (Arthur Penn), with Gene Hackman and Matt Dillon.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
Through Nov. 21: "The Doctor and the Devils" (Freddie Francis), with Timothy Dalton.
From Nov. 22: "Bad Medicine" (Harvey Miller), with Steve Guttenberg, Alan Arkin, and Julie Hagerty.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"When Father Was Away on Business" (Emir Kusturica; in Yugoslav).

Manhattan 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "After Hours" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 21: "Death Wish 3" (Michael Winner), with Charles Bronson. From Nov. 22: "King Solomon's Mines" (J. Lee Thompson), with Richard Chamberlain.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Agnes of God" (Norman Jewison), with Jane Fonda, Anne Bancroft, and Meg Tilly.
Theatre 2: "Jagged Edge" (†).

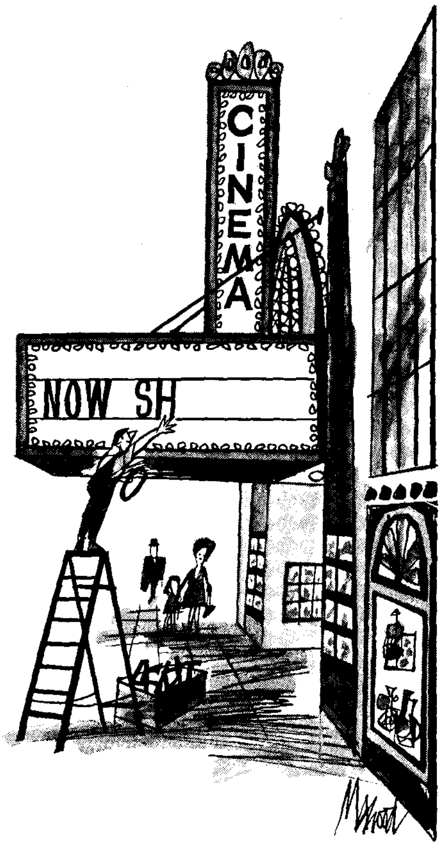
D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Kiss of the Spider Woman" (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: "Eleni" (Peter Yates), with Kate Nelligan, John Malkovich, and Linda Hunt.
Theatre 2: "Subway" (Luc Besson; in French), with Christopher Lambert and Isabelle Adjani.

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Once Bitten" (Howard Storm), with Lauren Hutton.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 26: "Sweet Dreams" (†). From Nov. 27: "Santa Claus: The Movie" (Jeannot Szwarc), with Dudley Moore and John Lithgow.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Twice in a Lifetime" (Bud Yorkin), with Gene Hackman, Ann-Margret, and Ellen Burstyn.

Loews New York Twin 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)



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24	25	26	27	28	29	30

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 25.

Theatre 1: Through Nov. 21: "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge" (Jack Sholder). From Nov. 22: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 21: "That Was Then . . . This Is Now" (Christopher Cain), with Emilio Estevez. From Nov. 22: "Fever Pitch" (Richard Brooks), with Ryan O'Neal.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"The Gods Must Be Crazy" (1979; Jamie Uys).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
Through Nov. 21: "Macaroni" (Ettore Scola), with Jack Lemmon and Marcello Mastroianni.
From Nov. 22: To be announced.

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
Through Nov. 21: "Death Wish 3" (Michael Winner), with Charles Bronson.
From Nov. 22: "One Magic Christmas" (Phillip Borsos), with Mary Steenburgen and Harry Dean Stanton.

Loews Orpheum 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 26: "To Live and Die in L.A." (William Friedkin), with William L. Petersen and Willem Dafoe. From Nov. 27: "Rocky IV" (Sylvester Stallone), with Stallone, Talia Shire, Burt Young, and Carl Weathers.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 21: "TRansylvania 6-5000" (Rudy De Luca), with Jeff Goldblum and Joseph Bologna. From Nov. 22: To be announced.

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Through Nov. 21: "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge" (Jack Sholder).
From Nov. 22: "Bad Medicine" (Harvey Miller), with Steve Guttenberg, Alan Arkin, and Julie Hagerty.

R.K.O. Century 86th St. Twin, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 26: "Once Bitten" (Howard Storm), with Lauren Hutton. From Nov. 27: "Santa Claus: The Movie" (Jeannot Szwarc), with Dudley Moore and John Lithgow.
Theatre 2: "Krush Groove" (Michael Schultz).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum 1 and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 26: "Choosing Children" (1984; directed by Debra Chasnoff and Kim Klausner), and "Breaking Silence" (1984; Theresa Tollini), both documentaries. From Nov. 27: "Late Chrysanthemums" (1954; Mikio Naruse; in Japanese).
Theatre 2: "Buddies" (Arthur J. Bressan, Jr.).

Bleecker St. Cinema 1 and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 26: "28 Up" (1984; Michael Apted), a documentary. From Nov. 27: "Chuck Amuck: Chuck Jones' Greatest Warner Bros. Cartoons," consisting of fifteen of his films.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 26: "Louie Bluie" (Terry Zwigoff), a documentary. From Nov. 27: "28 Up."

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 21: "El Diputado" (1969; Eloy de la Iglesia; in Spanish). From Nov. 22: "Gringo" (Lech Kowalski).
Theatre 2: "Mixed Blood" (Paul Morrissey).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
"Bring on the Night" (Michael Apted), a documentary, with Sting.

R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Kiss of the Spider Woman" (†).
Theatre 2: "Plenty" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 21: "Crossover Dreams" (Leon Ichaso), with Rubén Blades. From Nov. 22: "King Solomon's Mines" (J. Lee Thompson), with Richard Chamberlain.
Theatre 2: "Dance with a Stranger" (†).
Theatre 3: "Agnes of God" (Norman Jewison), with Jane Fonda, Anne Bancroft, and Meg Tilly.
Theatre 4: Through Nov. 21: "La Chèvre" (Francis Véber; in French), with Gérard Depardieu and Pierre Richard. From Nov. 22: "Colonel Redl" (István Szabó; in German), with Klaus Maria Brandauer.

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Once Bitten" (Howard Storm), with Lauren Hutton.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 26: "Sweet Dreams" (†). From Nov. 27: "Santa Claus: The Movie" (Jeannot Szwarc), with Dudley Moore and John Lithgow.
Theatre 3: "Jagged Edge" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
Through Nov. 21: "Agnes of God" (Norman Jewison), with Jane Fonda, Anne Bancroft, and Meg Tilly.
From Nov. 22: "One Magic Christmas" (Phillip Borsos), with Mary Steenburgen and Harry Dean Stanton.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
Through Nov. 21: "Fantasia" (†).
From Nov. 22: "White Nights" (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (757-2715)
"Hail Mary" (Jean-Luc Godard; in French).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
Through Nov. 25: "Colonel Redl" (István Szabó; in German), with Klaus Maria Brandauer.
From Nov. 26: "The Gig" (Frank Gilroy), with Wayne Rogers and Cleavon Little.

New Carnegie, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

"Bring on the Night" (Michael Apted), a documentary, with Sting.

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"The Official Story" (Luis Puenzo; in Spanish), with Norma Aleandro.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Plenty" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
Through Nov. 21: "Compromising Positions" (†).
From Nov. 22: "Fever Pitch" (Richard Brooks), with Ryan O'Neal.

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2 and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Kiss of the Spider Woman" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sugarbaby" (Percy Adlon; in German).
Theatre 3: "Dance with a Stranger" (†).

Cinema Studio 1 and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Shoah" (Claude Lanzmann), a nine-and-a-half-hour documentary. Part One will be shown daily.
Theatre 2: "Shoah." Part Two will be shown daily.

Embassy 72nd St. 1 and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: "Rasputin" (Elem Klimov; in Russian).
Theatre 2: "Sotto, Sotto" (Lina Wertmüller; in Italian).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 21: "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge" (Jack Sholder). From Nov. 22: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 26: "To Live and Die in L.A." (William Friedkin), with William L. Petersen and Willem Dafoe. From Nov. 27: "Rocky IV" (Sylvester Stallone), with Stallone, Talia Shire, Burt Young, and Carl Weathers.
Theatre 3: Through Nov. 21: "TRansylvania 6-5000" (Rudy De Luca), with Jeff Goldblum and Joseph Bologna. From Nov. 22: To be announced.
Theatre 4: Through Nov. 21: "Target" (Arthur Penn), with Gene Hackman and Matt Dillon. From Nov. 22: To be announced.
Theatre 5: Through Nov. 21: "After Hours" (†). From Nov. 22: To be announced.
Theatre 6: Through Nov. 21: "That Was Then . . . This Is Now" (Christopher Cain), with Emilio Estevez. From Nov. 22: "Fever Pitch" (Richard Brooks), with Ryan O'Neal.

Olympia Quad, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 21: "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge" (Jack Sholder). From Nov. 22: "Starchaser: The Legend of Orin," a 3-D animated film.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 21: "Krush Groove" (Michael Schultz). From Nov. 22: "King Solomon's Mines" (J. Lee Thompson), with Richard Chamberlain.
Theatre 3: Through Nov. 26: "Once Bitten" (Howard Storm), with Lauren Hutton. From Nov. 27: "Santa Claus: The Movie" (Jeannot Szwarc), with Dudley Moore and John Lithgow.
Theatre 4: Through Nov. 21: "TRansylvania 6-5000" (Rudy De Luca), with Jeff Goldblum and Joseph Bologna. From Nov. 22: "Agnes of God" (Norman Jewison), with Jane Fonda, Anne Bancroft, and Meg Tilly.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Theatres, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Target" (directed by Arthur Penn), with Gene Hackman and Matt Dillon.
Theatre 2: "Commando" (Mark Lester), with Arnold Schwarzenegger.
Theatre 3: "Rainbow Brite and the Star Stealer," an animated film.
Theatre 4: "Remo Williams: The Adventure Begins" (Guy Hamilton), with Fred Ward and Joel Grey.
Theatre 5: Through Nov. 21: "Basket Case." From Nov. 22: "Starchaser: The Legend of Orin," a 3-D animated film.
Theatre 6: Through Nov. 21: "After Hours" (†). From Nov. 22: "The Doctor and the Devils" (Freddie Francis), with Timothy Dalton.

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
Through Nov. 21: "Jagged Edge" (†).
From Nov. 22: "One Magic Christmas" (Phillip Borsos), with Mary Steenburgen and Harry Dean Stanton.

Embassy 2, 3 and 4, B'way at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 21: "Re-Animator" (†). From Nov. 22: "Jagged Edge" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Nov. 21: "Silver Bullet" (Daniel Attias), with Gary Busey. From Nov. 22: "Compromising Positions" (†).
Theatre 4: Through Nov. 21: "Sweet Dreams" (†). From Nov. 22: "Agnes of God" (Norman Jewison), with Jane Fonda, Anne Bancroft, and Meg Tilly.

Loews Astor Plaza, B'way at 44th. (869-8340)
Through Nov. 21: "To Live and Die in L.A." (William Friedkin), with William L. Petersen and Willem Dafoe.
From Nov. 22: To be announced.

Loews State 1 and 2, B'way at 45th. (575-5060)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 21: "That Was Then . . . This Is Now" (Christopher Cain), with Emilio Estevez. From Nov. 22: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 26: "TRansylvania 6-5000" (Rudy De Luca), with Jeff Goldblum and Joseph Bologna. From Nov. 27: "Rocky IV" (Sylvester Stallone), with Stallone, Talia Shire, Burt Young, and Carl Weathers.

Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
"Back to the Future" (†).

New Embassy 49th Street, Seventh Ave. at 49th. (757-7003)
"The Coca-Cola Kid" (Dusan Makavejev), with Eric Roberts. No performances on Wednesday, Nov. 20.

R.K.O. Century National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge" (Jack Sholder).
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 21: "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge." From Nov. 22: "King Solomon's Mines" (J. Lee Thompson), with Richard Chamberlain.

R.K.O. Century Warner Twin, B'way at 47th. (975-8369)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 21: "Krush Groove" (Michael Schultz). From Nov. 22: "Bad Medicine" (Harvey Miller), with Steve Guttenberg, Alan Arkin, and Julie Hagerty.
Theatre 2: "Krush Groove."

U.A. Twin 1 and 2, B'way at 49th. (247-1635)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 26: "Once Bitten" (Howard Storm), with Lauren Hutton. From Nov. 27: "Santa Claus: The Movie" (Jeannot Szwarc), with Dudley Moore and John Lithgow.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 26: "Death Wish 3" (Michael Winner), with Charles Bronson. From Nov. 27: To be announced.

REVIVAL HOUSES

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. at 57th. (757-2131)
Through Nov. 21: A program of Alberto Sordi films.
From Nov. 22: "Almonds and Raisins" (1985; directed by Russ Karel), a documentary.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through Nov. 21: "The Bicycle Thief" (1949; Vittorio De Sica; in Italian); and "The Miracle" (1959; Irving Rapper), with Carroll Baker and Walter Slezak.
Nov. 22-23: "Annie Hall" (1977; Woody Allen), with Allen and Diane Keaton; and "Manhattan" (1979; Woody Allen), with Allen, Diane Keaton, Michael Murphy, and Meryl Streep.
Nov. 24: "Around the World in 80 Days" (1956; Michael Anderson), with David Niven and Cantinflas.
Nov. 25-26: "Tim" (1981; Michael Pate; an Australian film), with Piper Laurie and Mel Gibson; and "Mrs. Soffel" (1984; Gillian Armstrong), with Diane Keaton, Mel Gibson, and Matthew Modine.
Nov. 27-28: "The Magic Flute" (1975; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish).
Nov. 29-30: "Life of Brian" (†); and "And Now for Something Completely Different" (1972), selected skits from the BBC-TV series "Monty Python's Flying Circus."

Metro Cinema, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Through Nov. 21: "Aguirre, the Wrath of

God" (1972; Werner Herzog; in German).

Nov. 22-24: "Tokyo Story" (1953; Yasujiro Ozu; in Japanese); and "Rashomon" (1951; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune, Machiko Kyo, Masayuki Mori, and Takashi Shimura.

Nov. 25-26: "The Life of O-Haru" (1952; Kenji Mizoguchi; in Japanese), with Kinuyo Tanaka; and "Princess Yang Kwei Fei" (†).

Nov. 27: "Merry Christmas, Mr. Lawrence" (1983; Nagisa Oshima), with David Bowie; and "The Sun's Burial" (1960; Nagisa Oshima; in Japanese).

From Nov. 28: "Yojimbo" (1961) and "Throne of Blood" (1957), both films in Japanese, directed by Akira Kurosawa, and with Toshiro Mifune.

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

Nov. 20: "The Mask of Dimitrios" (1944; Jean Negulesco), with Zachary Scott and Peter Lorre; and "Three Strangers" (1946; Jean Negulesco), with Geraldine Fitzgerald, Peter Lorre, and Sydney Greenstreet.

Nov. 21-23: "Pat and Mike" (1952; George Cukor), with Spencer Tracy, Katharine Hepburn, and Aldo Ray; and "Adam's Rib" (1949; George Cukor), with Spencer Tracy, Katharine Hepburn, Judy Holliday, Tom Ewell, Jean Hagen, and David Wayne.

Nov. 24-25: "Penny Serenade" (†); and "The Awful Truth" (1937; Leo McCarey), with Irene Dunne, Cary Grant, and Ralph Bellamy.

Nov. 26-27: "Babes in Arms" (†) and "Strike Up the Band" (†).

Nov. 28-30: "Captain Blood" (1935; Michael Curtiz), with Errol Flynn, Olivia de Havilland, and Basil Rathbone; and "The Adventures of Robin Hood" (†).

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)

Nov. 20-21: Two days of British films, eleven films in all.

Nov. 22-23: "The Beach Boys: An American Band" (1985; Malcolm Leo), a documentary; and "The Compleat Beatles" (1984; Patrick Montgomery), a documentary.

Nov. 24: "The Lovers" (†) and "Eva" (†).

Nov. 25: "Smash-Up" (†); "Tulsa" (1949; Stuart Heisler), with Susan Hayward, Robert Preston, and Pedro Armendariz; and "Jack London" (1944), with Michael O'Shea and Susan Hayward.

Nov. 26: "Nighthawks" (1979; Ron Peck and Paul Hallam), with Ken Robertson; and "Victim" (†).

Nov. 27: "Winterset" (†) and "Street Scene" (†).

Nov. 28: "Ballad of a Soldier" (1959; Grigori Chukhrai; in Russian), with Vladimir Ivashov; and "The Cranes Are Flying" (1957; Mikhail Kalatozov; in Russian), with Tatiana Samoilova.

Nov. 29-30: "Dr. Strangelove" (1964; Stanley Kubrick), with Peter Sellers, George C. Scott, and Sterling Hayden; and "The President's Analyst" (†).

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Nov. 20: "Life with Father" (1947; Michael Curtiz), with Irene Dunne, William Powell, and ZaSu Pitts; and "Our Town" (1940; Sam Wood), with Frank Craven, Martha Scott, and William Holden.

Nov. 21: "True Confession" (1937; Wesley Ruggles), with Carole Lombard, John Barrymore, and Fred MacMurray; and "We're Not Dressing" (1934; Norman Taurog), with Bing Crosby, Ethel Merman, and Burns and Allen.

Nov. 22-23: "The Philadelphia Story" (1940; George Cukor), with Katharine Hepburn, James Stewart, and Cary Grant; and "Bringing Up Baby" (1938; Howard Hawks), with Katharine Hepburn, Cary Grant, and Charles Ruggles.

Nov. 24: "And Then There Were None" (1945; René Clair), with Barry Fitzgerald, Walter Huston, Louis Hayward, and Judith Anderson; and "Dead of Night" (1945), a five-part English film about the supernatural.

Nov. 25: "October" ("Ten Days That Shook the World;" 1927; Sergei Eisenstein; a Russian silent film); and "Potemkin" (1925; Sergei Eisenstein; a Russian silent film).

Nov. 26: "Odd Man Out" (1946; Carol Reed), with James Mason, Robert Newton, and Kathleen Ryan; and "Outcast of the Islands" (†).

Nov. 27: "Broadway Thru a Keyhole" (1933; Lowell Sherman), with Constance Cummings and Russ Columbo; and "Go Into Your Dance" (†).

Nov. 28: "The Horn Blows at Midnight" (1945; Raoul Walsh), with Jack Benny, Alexis Smith, and Margaret Dumont; and "George Washington Slept Here" (1942; William Keighley), with Ann Sheridan, Jack Benny, Charles Coburn, and Percy Kilbride.

Nov. 29-30: "Macbeth" (1948; Orson Welles), with Welles, Jeanette Nolan, Dan O'Herlihy, and Roddy McDowall; and "Chimes at Midnight" ("Falstaff;" 1967; Orson Welles), with Welles, Keith Baxter, John Gielgud, and Margaret Rutherford.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

Theatre 1: Nov. 21 at 2:30 and 6: "The Seashell and the Clergyman" (1928; directed by Germaine Dulac; a French silent film); and "The Man with the Movie Camera" (1929; Dziga Vertov; a Russian silent film). . . . ¶ Nov. 22 at 2:30: "E Flat" (1961; Ritwik Ghatak; in Bengali, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 22 at 6: "Reason, Debate, and a Tale" (1974; Ritwik Ghatak; in Bengali, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 23 at 12:30: A program of Warner Brothers cartoons. . . . ¶ Nov. 23 at 3: "The Cloud Capped Star" (1960; Ritwik Ghatak; in Bengali, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 23 at 5: "The Runaway" (1959; Ritwik Ghatak; in Bengali, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 24 at 12:30: A program of Warner Brothers cartoons. . . . ¶ Nov. 24 at 2: "Reason, Debate, and a Tale." . . . ¶ Nov. 24 at 5: "E Flat." . . . ¶ Nov. 25 at 2: "Subarnarekha" (1962; Ritwik Ghatak; in Bengali, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 25 at 6 and Nov. 26 at 2:30: A film from India, to be announced. . . . ¶ Nov. 26 at 6: "Subarnarekha." . . . ¶ Nov. 28 at 2:30: "Variety" (1924; E. A. Dupont; a German silent film, with English intertitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 29 at 2 and 6: "Nehru" (1985; Shyam Benegal and Yuri Aldokhin), a three-part documentary. . . . ¶ Nov. 30 at 12:30: A program of Warner Brothers cartoons. . . . ¶ Nov. 30 at 2 and 5: "Satyajit Ray" (1985; Shyam Benegal), a documentary.

Theatre 2: Nov. 21 at 3 and 6:30: "Strategic Thrust: The Making of a Nuclear-Free Palau" (1984; James Heddle), a documentary. . . . ¶ Nov. 22 at 3: "Dear Karl" (1984; Maria Knilli; in German, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 22 at 6:30 and Nov. 23 at 2:30: "The Future of Emily" (1984; Helma Sanders-Brahms; in French, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 23 at 5:30: "Dear Karl." . . . ¶ Nov. 24 at 2:30: "Following the Fuhrer" (1985; Erwin Leiser; in German, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 24 at 5: "The Practice of Love" (1985; Valie Export; in German, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 25 at 6:30: "Aspects of a Certain History" (1984; John Knecht). Mr. Knecht will be present. . . . ¶ Nov. 26 at 3 and 6:30: "Arsenal" (1929; Alexander Dovzhenko; in Russian, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 29 at 3: "The Practice of Love." . . . ¶ Nov. 29 at 6:30: "Following the Fuhrer." The director, Erwin Leiser, will be present. . . . ¶ Nov. 30 at 2:30: "Kolp" (1985; Roland Suso Richter; in German, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 30 at 5:30: "Super" (1985; Adolf Winkelmann; in German, with English subtitles).

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—Three film sculptures by Deborah Whitman—"A Cloud Is on Top of the Box of Doors" (1982), "A Staircase with a Tree at the End" (1983), and "The Upper Room" (1984). Continuous showings Tuesdays, 1 to 8, Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5, and Sundays, noon to 6. Closed Mondays and Thanksgiving Day.

Beacon Theatre, B'way at 74th St. (787-1477)—"Sally of the Sawdust" (1925; D. W. Griffith, a silent film, with W. C. Fields, Carol Dempster, and Alfred Lunt. (Nov. 25 at 2 and 8.)

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

The Adventures of Robin Hood (1938)—One of the most popular of all adventure films—stirring for children and intensely nostalgic for adults. As Robin, Errol Flynn achieves a mixture of daring and self-mockery, like that of Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., in the twenties. With improbably pretty Olivia de Havilland as Maid Marian, Alan Hale as Little John, Ian Hunter as Richard the Lion-Hearted, Basil Rathbone and Claude Rains as the villains, and Herbert Mundin, Patric Knowles, Melville Cooper, and Una O'Connor. The story is clear, the color ravishing, the acting simple and crude. The rousing, buoyant direction is credited to Michael Curtiz and William Keighley, the former having replaced the latter. (Regency; Nov. 28-30.)

After Hours—Martin Scorsese directed, and his work here is livelier and more companionable than it has been in recent years. But this skittish paranoid fantasy is just a classroom exercise of a movie: elegant, crisp, and flashy. Griffin Dunne plays a young word-processor operator in midtown New York, who goes down to SoHo for a date and finds himself trapped in a nightmare world, where he has to contend with one flaky, threatening woman after another: Rosanna Arquette, Linda Fiorentino, Teri Garr, Catherine O'Hara, and Verna Bloom. With John Heard, Cheech and Chong, Dick Miller, and Bronson Pinchot. Script by Joseph Minion. (Reviewed in our issue of 9/23/85.) (New Gramercy, and Manhattan. . . . ¶ Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Theatres; through Nov. 21.)

Babes in Arms (1939)—This version of the Rodgers and Hart Broadway musical didn't retain much of their material, but it starred Judy Garland (it was her big year, the year of "The Wizard of Oz") and Mickey Rooney as the children of vaudevillians, and it has great charm. Busby Berkeley directed and choreographed; the direction is likably naïve, the choreography is primitive-surreal. The songs (from an assortment of sources) include "Where or When," "The Lady Is a Tramp," and "You Are My Lucky Star." With June Preisser, Charles Winninger, Guy Kibbee, and Margaret Hamilton. (Regency; Nov. 26-27.)

Back to the Future—Directed by Robert Zemeckis, this piece of Pop Art Americana is a clever, generally engaging screwball comedy. Christopher Lloyd is the small-town crackpot inventor who builds a time machine, and Michael J. Fox is Marty, the seventeen-year-old high-school boy who is hurtled back thirty years to 1955, where his parents are seventeen-year-olds at the same school. The movie has the structure of a comedy classic, but it doesn't have the rambunctiousness or the maniacal edge; the thinking is cramped and conventional. With Lea Thompson and Crispin Glover. (7/29/85) (Eastside Cinema, and Movieland.)

Compromising Positions—Directed by Frank Perry, from the novel by Susan Isaacs, the movie provides a batch of actresses with a chance to show some comic verve. Susan Sarandon is the heroine, whose unquenchable curiosity saves her from the doldrums of affluence in the suburbs with a lawyer husband; when her smiley-eyed, lecherous dentist (Joe Mantegna) is murdered in his snazzy office, she can't resist poking into the case, because it reveals so much about what has been going on around her which she has been unaware of. Judith Ivey is in top form as a frisky cynic who seems to have been wised up from birth. And Deborah Rush is startlingly poignant as a tarty, uneducated blonde, with scars on her tummy and frightened eyes. With Edward Herrmann, Raul Julia, and Anne De Salvo. (9/9/85) (Loews Paramount; through Nov. 21. . . . ¶ Embassy; starting Nov. 22.)

Dance with a Stranger—Set in London in 1954 and 1955, and featuring Miranda Richardson as Ruth Ellis, the demi-prostitute who put a few slugs in her weakling young lover (played by Rupert Everett) and was the last woman in England to be sent to the gallows, this

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

English film might be described as kitchen-sink *film noir*. The director, Mike Newell, doesn't give you a minute's relief. The picture is all style—style used to show us the shabbiness of the characters' lives and how they're all trapped, doing what's inevitable. With Ian Holm. (8/26/85) (Quad Cinema, and Lincoln Plaza.)

Eva (1962)—Jeanne Moreau as an elegant, heartless slut, and Stanley Baker as a born victim. Joseph Losey's film, set in Venice and Rome, was meddled with by the producers; what's left has flair and style (maybe too much of each), but the intentions aren't altogether clear. (Thalia; Nov. 24.)

Fantasia (1940)—Disney enlisted an odd assortment of collaborators (among them Stokowski, who did it voluntarily, and Stravinsky, who was brought in involuntarily), and this grab bag of ambitious animated shorts—an attempt to combine high art and mass culture—was publicized as if it were an artistic landmark. Disney's animators provided visual interpretations of Bach's "Toccata and Fugue in D Minor" and of hyped-up excerpts: volcanoes erupt and dinosaurs battle during "The Rite of Spring;" garlanded girl centaurs cavort during Beethoven's "Pastoral." "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," featuring Mickey Mouse, and parts of other sequences are first-rate Disney, but the total effect is grotesquely kitschy. (Ziegfeld; through Nov. 21.)

Go Into Your Dance (1935)—Al Jolson and Ruby Keeler (who got married when the picture was finished) have a terrific number together ("About a Quarter to Nine"), and you get a sense of how magnetic he must have been on the stage when he sings "She's a Latin from Manhattan." The movie isn't top-notch, though; the script is dreary and things don't quite come together. But the cast includes Helen Morgan, Glenda Farrell, Patsy Kelly, Akim Tamiroff, Benny Rubin, Phil Regan, Sharon Lynne, and Barton MacLane. Ruby Keeler had been in many musicals before this one, but she retains her peculiarly appealing (and baffling) amateurishness. Archie Mayo directed. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Nov. 27.)

Jagged Edge—This thriller doesn't offer the pleasures of style, but it does the job. Jeff Bridges plays the San Francisco newspaper publisher-editor who is tried for the murder of his rich wife, who owned the paper; Peter Coyote is the D.A. prosecuting him; and Glenn Close is the radiantly blond woman lawyer who defends him, and falls in love with him. Working from a script by Joe Eszterhas that's smart, pared down, and efficient, the director, Richard Marquand, sets up the situations and delivers the payoffs; he doesn't show much in the way of imagination or devotion to craft, but he gets distinctively pungent performances. With Robert Loggia, Leigh Taylor-Young, Marshall Colt, and Karen Austin. (11/4/85) (34th St. East, Coronet, and 23rd St. West Triplex.... ¶ Embassy 1; through Nov. 21.... ¶ Embassy; starting Nov. 22.)

Kiss of the Spider Woman—Set in a nameless South American country, Hector Babenco's film is about a homosexual window dresser, Molina (William Hurt), and a revolutionary, Valentín (Raul Julia), who share a prison cell. Molina tries to comfort Valentín and help him forget his pain and misery by telling him the stories of old movies. Hurt is just about the only thing to look at; he's very likable in the scenes where Molina reveals his tenderness and warmth and humor. But it's a slack piece of moviemaking, and as sentimental as the forties screen romances that Molina is infatuated with. This Brazilian production, made in English, from Manuel Puig's novel, was shot in São Paulo. (8/26/85) (D. W. Griffith, R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, and Lincoln Plaza.)

Life of Brian (1979)—And now for something completely Biblical, from the troupe who did "Monty Python and the Holy Grail" (1975). Brian—played by the unhinged Graham Chapman—is an uncharismatic person who was born in Bethlehem and is unaccountably mistaken for the Messiah. The comic acting—by Chapman and by John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, Terry Jones, and Michael Palin as centurions, members of the People's

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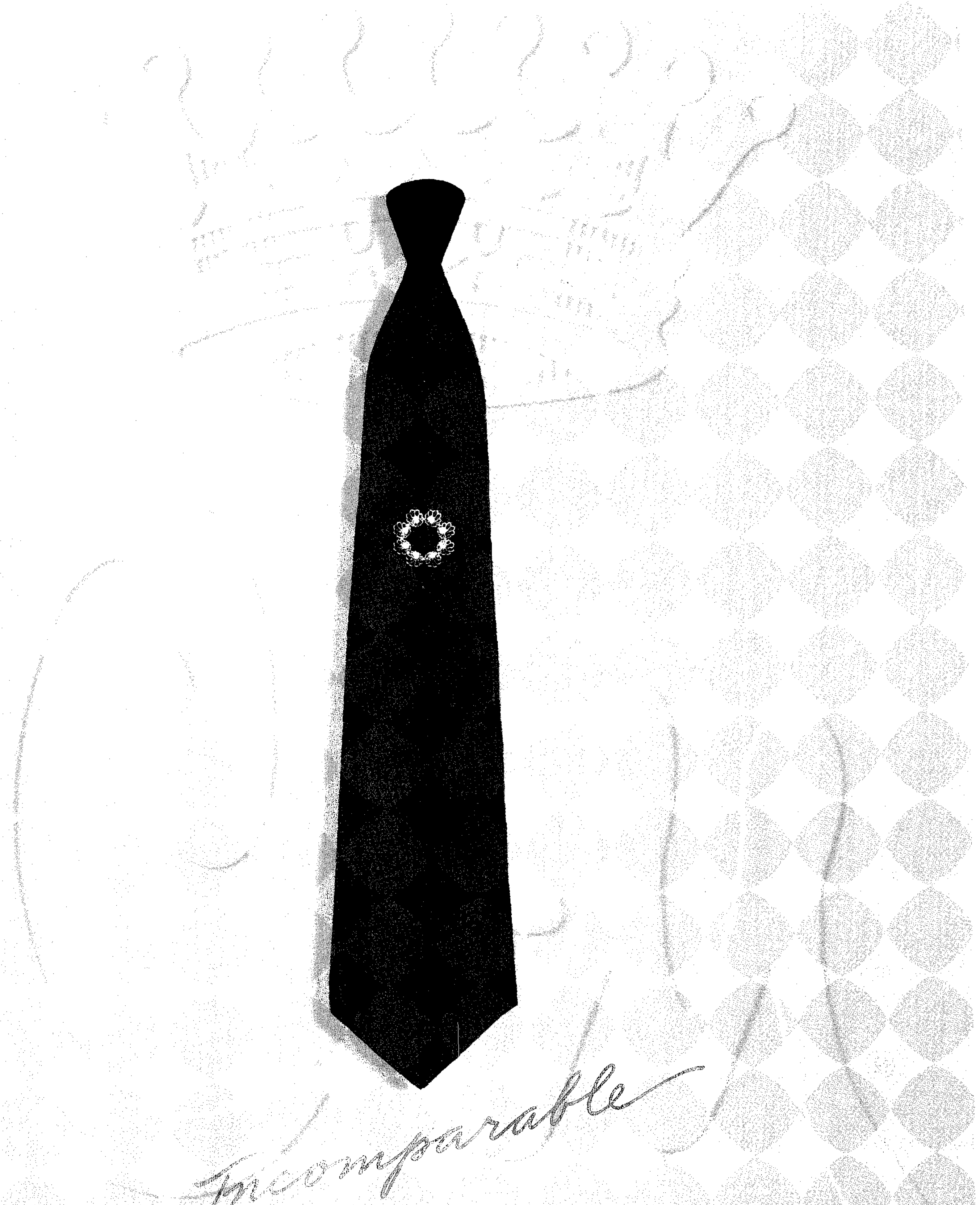

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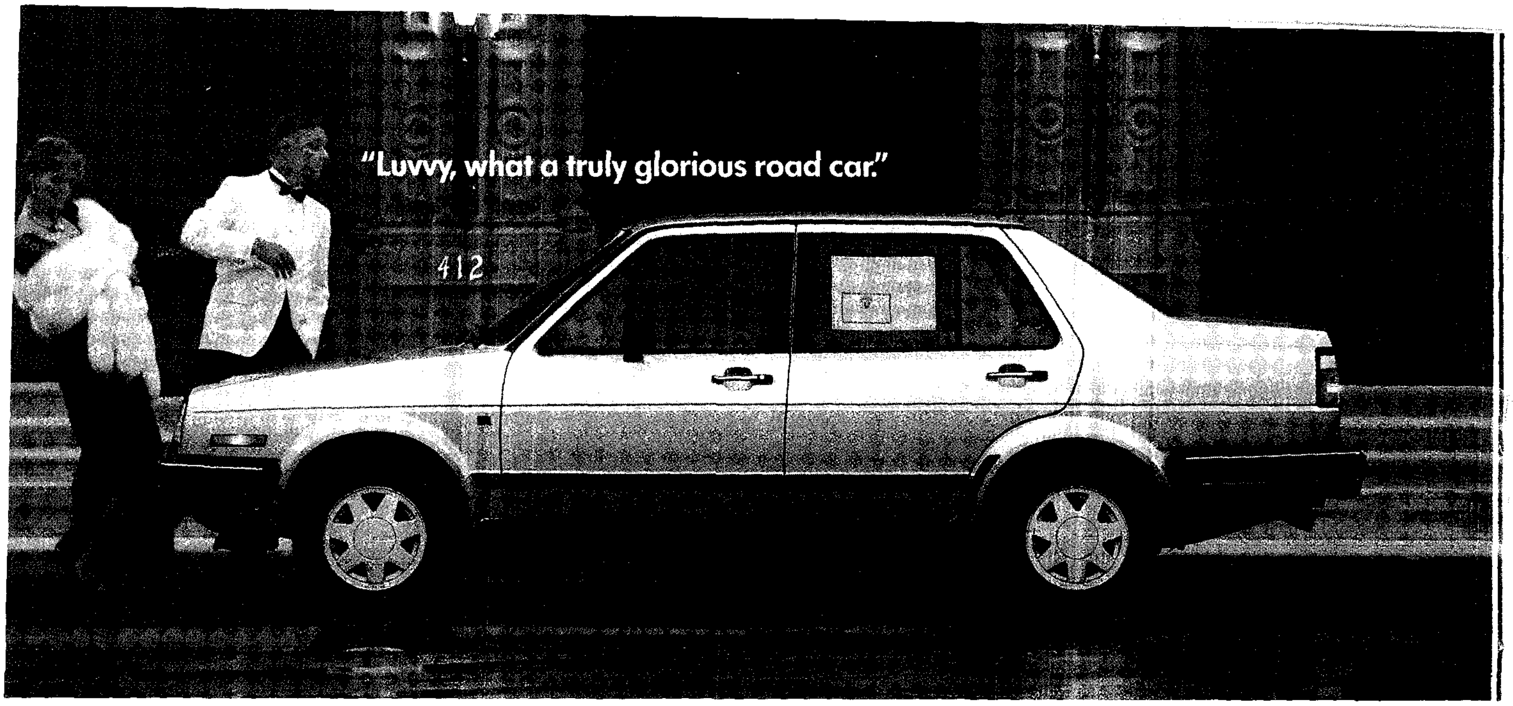
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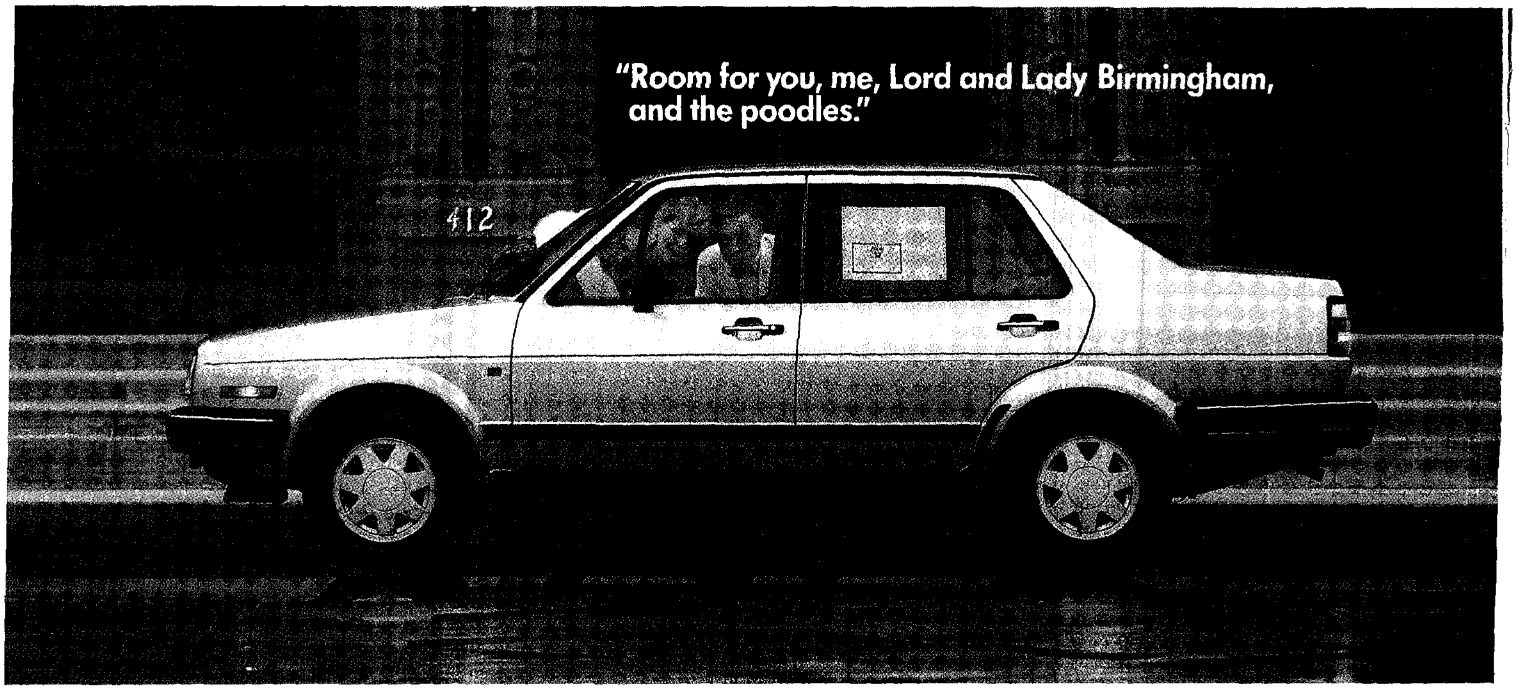
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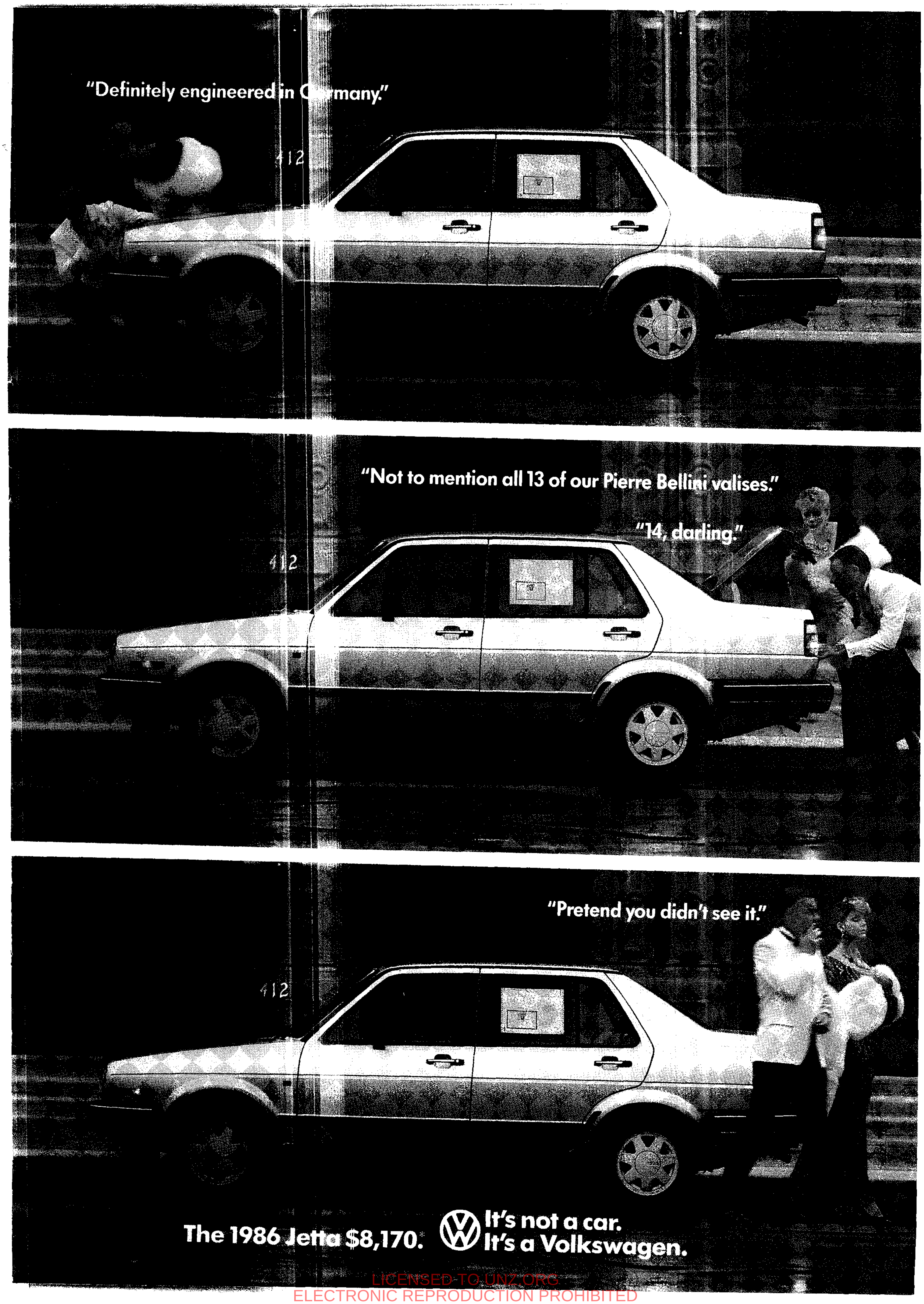
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Liberation Front of Judea, rambling prophets, listeners who cannot quite hear the Sermon on the Mount, etc.—is superb, as always. But the movie will seem a bit oversustained if you like the Python TV shows for their libertine discontinuities and perverse sense of scale. Written by the whole troupe, in Python style—intellectual but not above a blind-man sight gag. Directed by Terry Jones. (Cinema Village; Nov. 29-30.)

The Lovers (1959)—The romantic sex film that made Jeanne Moreau infamously famous. As a modern-day Emma Bovary, she makes love very elegantly in water—maybe because the director, Louis Malle, was once Jacques-Yves Cousteau's assistant. In French. (Thalia; Nov. 24.)

Outcast of the Islands (1952)—A marvellous film (drawn from Joseph Conrad's work) that relatively few people have seen. It's probably the only movie that has ever attempted to deal in a complex way with the subject of the civilized man's ambivalence about the savage. It also contains some of the most remarkable sequences ever filmed by the English director Carol Reed; it's an uneven movie, but with splendid moments throughout. Trevor Howard is superb as Willems, who makes himself an outcast first through contemptible irresponsibility and through betrayal of those who trust him, and finally and hopelessly when, against his will, he is attracted to the silent, primitive girl, the terrifying Aissa (played by Kerima). With Robert Morley, Wendy Hiller, and Ralph Richardson. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Nov. 26.)

Penny Serenade (1941)—Irene Dunne and Cary Grant, who had made audiences laugh in "The Awful Truth" and "My Favorite Wife," jerked tears this time. They play a childless couple who adopt an infant, learn to love it, and then lose it. The director, George Stevens, dragged his feet (the picture is more than two hours long) and he wasn't very subtle; it's "sincere" in an inert and horribly pristine way. The appeal to the audience is that two glamorous stars play an ordinary couple and suffer the calamities that do in fact happen to ordinary people. Grant could hardly have been better. He brought out everything that it was possible to bring out of his warmed-over lines, weighing them perfectly, so that they almost seemed felt. With Edgar Buchanan, Beulah Bondi, and Ann Doran. (Regency; Nov. 24-25.)

Plenty—David Hare's sick-soul-of-England play, which he adapted for the screen and Fred Schepisi directed, turns his own preachiness into the intellectual clarity of an abrasive woman. After serving courageously as a British courier for the French Resistance, Susan Traherne (Meryl Streep) has her youthful idealism destroyed by the hypocrisy and materialism of postwar life. Her outspokenness turns her into a scourge, and eventually into a basket case. Hare's means in this movie are every bit as constricted as what he's attacking. And as Streep plays Susan there's no imploded energy in her rudeness and no force in the film. She just isn't there. With John Gielgud, Tracey Ullman, Charles Dance, Ian McKellen, Sam Neill, and Sting. (10/7/85) (R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, and Cinema 3.)

The President's Analyst (1967)—James Coburn, as the psychoanalyst to the President of the United States, is pursued by a Russian spy (Severn Darden), an American agent (Godfrey Cambridge), and everybody else. This erratic political spoof, written and directed by Theodore Flicker, is very lively when Flicker is just making sophomoric jokes, but he doesn't seem to know what he's good at, or how to stick to it. (Thalia; Nov. 29-30.)

Princess Yang Kwei Fei (1955)—One of the great Mizoguchi's eighty-odd films. This one is set in China in the eighth century: a stirring, gentle love story about an emperor and a concubine. Mizoguchi began his career as a painter, and his films show it. Very rewarding. In Japanese. (Metro Cinema; Nov. 25-26.)

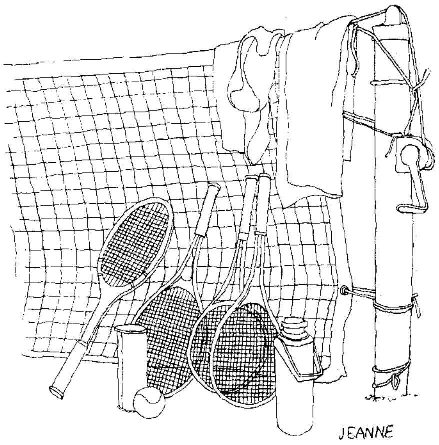
Re-Animator—Adapted from a series of six stories that H. P. Lovecraft published in 1922, this horror film about a medical student with a fluorescent greenish-yellow serum that restores the dead to hideous, unpredictable activity is close to being a silly ghoulie classic—the bloodier it gets, the funnier it is. It's like pop Buñuel; the jokes hit you in a subterranean comic zone that the surrealists' pranks sometimes reached, but without the surrealists' self-consciousness (and art-consciousness). This is indigenous American junkiness, like the Mel Brooks–Gene Wilder "Young Frankenstein," but looser and more lowdown. ("Re-Animator" wasn't submitted to the Ratings Board.) This is the first movie directed by Stuart Gordon (one of the founders of the Organic Theatre, in Chicago); the actors he picked perform with a straight-faced, hip aplomb. Herbert West, the re-animator, is played by Jeffrey Combs with pursed lips and a clammy-prissy set of the jaw. David Gale is the hypocritical lecher who loses his head, Robert Sampson is the Dean, Barbara Crampton is the Dean's creamy-pink daughter (who's at her loveliest when she's being defiled), and Bruce Abbott is her adoring fiancé. (11/18/85) (Embassy; through Nov. 21.)

Smash-Up (1947)—Alcoholism became a hot, gaudy movie subject after the success of "The Lost Weekend" (1945), and Susan Hayward had her turn at no-holds-barred drunkenness and suffering in this dismal, overwrought melodrama, directed by Stuart Heisler. At the end, half stewed but valiant, she rescues her little daughter from a burning house and promptly hops on the wagon. It may be hard to believe, but the writers who worked on this included Dorothy Parker and John Howard Lawson, and it was presented with some solemnity as a prestige picture. With Lee Bowman, Marsha Hunt, Eddie Albert, and Carl Esmond. (Thalia; Nov. 25.)

Street Scene (1931)—Samuel Goldwyn, who had a high regard for dramatists, produced this remarkably faithful version of Elmer Rice's famous play, with the lovely and gifted young Sylvia Sidney, David Landau as the man who murders his wife (Estelle Taylor), and members of the original Broadway cast, including Beulah Bondi as the venomous old harpy. The intelligent direction is by King Vidor. (Thalia; Nov. 27.)

Strike Up the Band (1940)—Judy Garland and Mickey Rooney, that hard-to-forget teen-age vamp June Preisser, and Paul Whiteman and his orchestra in a musical directed by Busby Berkeley that is so poorly paced, and so loaded with sanctimonious moral lessons, that even the George and Ira Gershwin score doesn't save it. The script is like a noose around everybody's neck. Rooney is the drummer in the high-school band that turns itself into a swing orchestra, with Garland as the vocalist; the group is trying to raise money to compete in a national contest. With William Tracy, Larry Nunn, and Virginia Brissac. (Regency; Nov. 26-27.)

Sweet Dreams—As the pop-and-country singer Patsy Cline, Jessica Lange has a raw physicality that's challenging and heroic. The singing voice that comes out of her is from the vocal tracks of recordings that Patsy Cline made between 1960 and 1963, and Lange's body lives up to the sound. The weakness of this kind of bio-pic is that once it's on the rails you can see where it's heading, and the basic story seems banal, but, scene by scene, the script, by Robert Getchell, has a funny, edgy spontaneity, a tang. And the director, Karel Reisz, doesn't step back from Patsy; she's taken on her own terms. As Patsy's husband, Ed Harris brings the role a tragic, pitiable sweetness. With Ann Wedgeworth as Patsy's mother. People cry at this movie though it isn't sentimental—it's an honest tearjerker. (10/21/85) (Embassy; through Nov. 21. . . . ¶ Gemini, and 23rd St. West Triplex; through Nov. 26.)



Victim (1961)—This pioneering attempt to create public sympathy for homosexuals and to publicize the English laws that put them in jeopardy is ingenious, moralistic, and moderately amusing. Structurally, it's a slick thriller about a blackmail ring that preys on homosexuals. There's a terribly self-conscious attempt to distinguish between the "love" that the barrister hero (Dirk Bogarde) feels for his wife (Sylvia Syms) and the physical desire—presumably a lower order of emotion—that he once felt for a young man (Peter McEnery), who appears to be more interesting in every way than the wife. The plot requires the barrister to sacrifice his career—to confess his own homosexuality—in order to trap the blackmailers. Basil Dearden directed, from a screenplay by Janet Green and John McCormick. With Dennis Price. (Thalia; Nov. 26.)

White Nights—The magnificent Mikhail Baryshnikov, who might have been created for the movie camera, shames the movie he's in. He plays a Russian ballet star who defected from the Soviet Union to the U.S. in the seventies and is on his way to dance in Tokyo when his plane crash-lands in Siberia. The movie's central gimmick is that the ballet dancer is put in the care of a black American tap dancer (Gregory Hines, acting morose and embittered) who defected from the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War. Except for the happiness he has found with his Russian wife (Isabella Rossellini), the tap dancer is miserable, and now a K.G.B. colonel tells him that if he can't convince the ballet star to renounce the U.S. and perform in just a few days at a Kirov gala, he'll be taken out of the Siberian playhouse where he has been performing and sent to work in the mines. This cheap melodramatic plot is like a straitjacket that the director, Taylor Hackford, got into voluntarily and can't wriggle out of. The film is meant to be about two dancers who, each in his own way, have fled their countries in quest of freedom of movement, but it turned into a movie about dancers in a funk. It's often ludicrously bad, but Rossellini, a great beauty hidden in a mousy role, evokes her mother (Ingrid Bergman), around the time of "Casablanca," and there's enough footage of Baryshnikov to carry you past the embarrassments of the tacky script. The opening sequence—a performance of the Roland Petit ballet "Le Jeune Homme et la Mort"—is superb; Twyla Tharp choreographed the Baryshnikov-Hines duet to David Pack's "Prove Me Wrong." With Jerzy Skolimowski as the Colonel, and Geraldine Page, Helen Mirren, and John Glover. The script is credited to James Goldman and Eric Hughes. (11/18/85) (Ziegfeld; starting Nov. 22.)

Winterset (1936)—Maxwell Anderson's most famous verse drama—a blend of "Romeo and Juliet" and the Sacco-Vanzetti case—was widely held to be the supremely eloquent last word on the unconquerable soul of man. Burgess Meredith made his first screen appearance as Mio, giving fine voice and excellent interpretation to the soaring banalities that one might—in a romantic mood—mistake for poetry. Even with Anderson's poetics slightly trimmed, the play is still in a grand manner that just won't do on the screen. But there are fine moments in the performances, and there's something childishly touching in the florid dramatic effects. With Edward Ellis, Margo, Eduardo Ciannelli, Stanley Ridges, Maurice Moscovitch, and Paul Guilfoyle. Directed by Alfred Santell. (Thalia; Nov. 27.)

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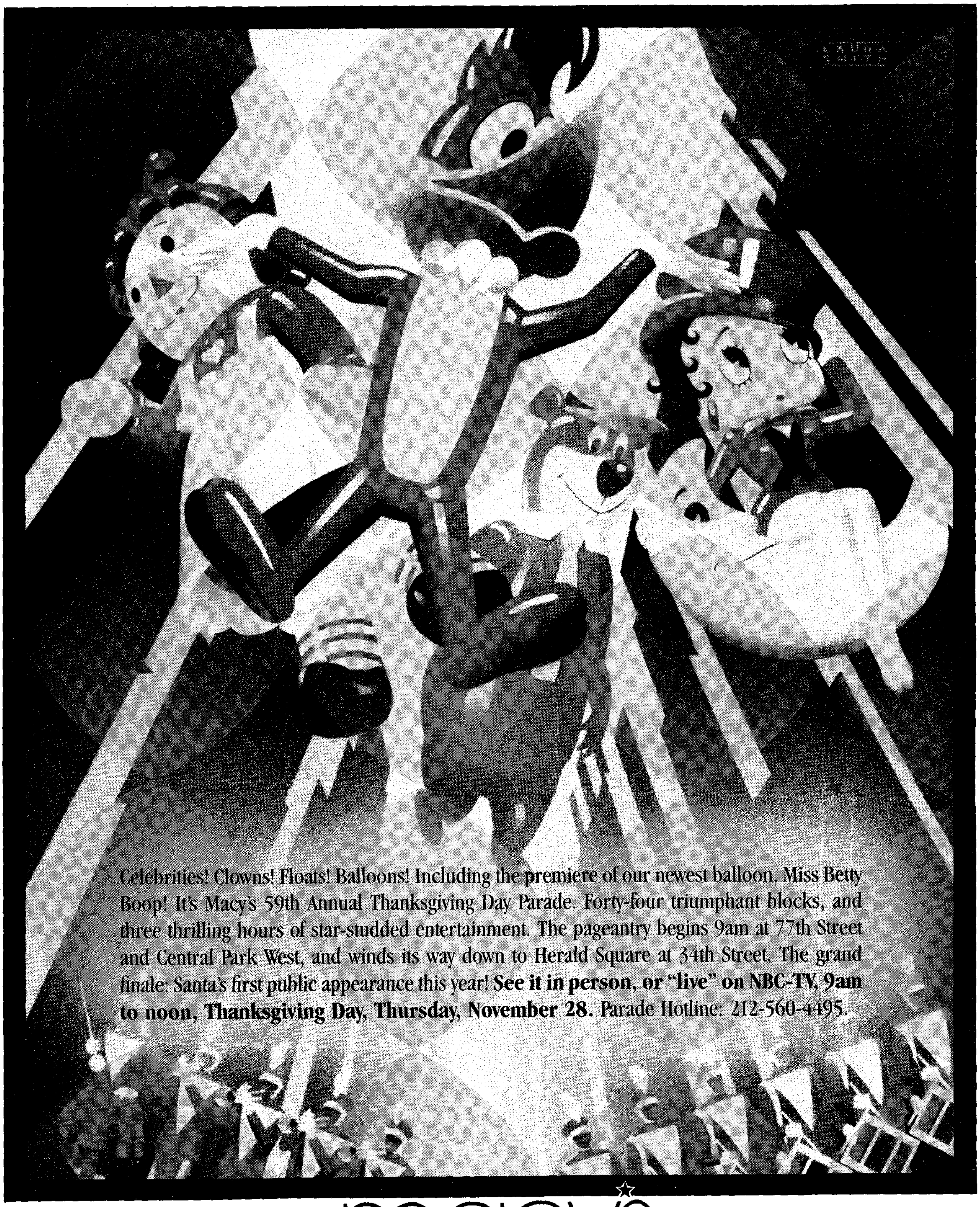

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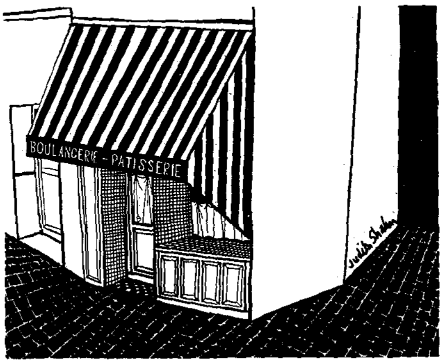
THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

A NEW kind of children's book, in which the reader is invited to intervene in the story, is being published these days. Little Bunny is lost in a dark wood, far from his cozy burrow and Mother Bunny, and Felix the Fox is offering to show him the way back. The book now offers a choice: if you think Little Bunny should accompany Felix, turn to page 8; if you think he should run away in the opposite direction as fast as possible, turn to page 11. Depending on your decision, and on later decisions that you must make, Little Bunny may or may not get out of the dark wood in one piece. This literary innovation is unsettling, for if in the past there was one thing that everybody could count on about written stories it was that they would march to predestined conclusions, without any assistance or possibility of interference from the reader, who was thus accorded the pleasurable status of interested but completely uninvolved spectator. That was one of the differences between books and life which made books enjoyable. But now, as in those theatrical productions in which the audience is invited to mill around on the stage or troop out of the theatre onto the street, or those artistic events in which the audience discovers that it is part of the work, the child reader is handed responsibility for the outcome of the story, and a degree of nervousness and uncertainty, formerly characteristic of life but not of books, enters in. Yet none of this is very surprising, perhaps, in view of the fact that while stories were being invaded by elements of real life, real life—in one respect, at least—was becoming more like a story. Stories traditionally have endings. And individual life, of course, has always had an ending, too, but the collective life of mankind (history) has until recently been a story without end—a story in which all other stories began and finished but which itself would not finish. Now, with the splitting of the atom, history has acquired a potential ending. Or, to be more precise (and to take cognizance of the various predictions that God will sooner or later destroy the world), it has acquired a scientifically verifiable possible ending that could be brought about by human action. The choice before us is not between one ending of a story and another but between an ending and no ending—between finitude and infinity. The chains of causality in our compact world are surprisingly short. It has been said that there is a sequence of personal acquaintance only five links long that connects every American to the President; that is, everyone has a friend whose friend's friend's friend knows the President. Probably the potential chain that links almost any public crisis with the end of the world isn't any longer; that is, if the statesmen at the highest levels made the worst decision five times in a row they would bring us to the end of the world. But it may also be that five wise decisions taken at the highest levels would turn us toward safety. This week, President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev, to whom the lives of all of us have been collectively entrusted, are grappling with some of those decisions. If they decide well, they can start the world down the path that leads out of the dark wood.



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Winter Hardy

THE other day, we drove up to the Onteora Arboretum, a mile or so above Tannersville, New York, in the northeastern Catskills, to watch Dr. and Mrs. Edward H. Ahrens, Jr., who founded the arboretum eight years ago, and who constitute its entire staff, finish preparations for the winter, sheltering the seedlings in the nursery and saying farewell to the young trees and shrubs awaiting their test of cold, snow, and wind. The arboretum is small—seven sloping acres at the foot of Parker Mountain. (By way of comparison, Washington Square Park is about ten acres.) Its scientific purpose, however, is grand—to find out why some trees are winter hardy and others are not.

Dr. Ahrens is not a botanist but a medical-research scientist, an emeritus professor at Rockefeller University, where for four decades he headed a team that investigated how the human body makes use of fatty compounds. Mrs. Ahrens is a professional decorator who has been evolving, willy-nilly, into a landscape architect specializing in arboretum décor. Dr. Ahrens had suggested that we look for them at the arboretum pond, explaining that the pond's water level was about a foot too high, and they would probably be working on the drainage ditch. "We need to deepen the ditch," he had said, "but we will have to cut through bedrock. We've got a man coming with a pneumatic drill to help us with that."

We parked in a gravelled lot, walked across the arboretum's southern boundary, Maude Adams Road, which was coated with decaying red and yellow leaves, and heard the rat-a-tat-tat of a jackhammer, so familiar to New Yorkers. Nothing else reminded us of the city, where the atmosphere early that morning had been benign, golden autumn weather, with faint memories of summer; up here in the mountains, the sunny air was crystalline but cold, with forebodings of winter. We entered the arboretum through a gate in an electrified wire fence, designed to discourage deer, and stepped cautiously onto the straw-colored grass, still damp from melted frost. In the distance, at the edge of the pond, we saw three people in a ditch. As we got closer, we saw that the figure on the left, a sunburned, mustachioed young man in a checked work shirt, was the jackhammer operator. The figure in the middle, also wearing a checked shirt, with chino pants and rubber boots, was Dr. Ahrens. He was deepening the ditch with a heavy spade, turning out loads of mud onto the grass. The figure on the right, wearing a sheepskin jacket, bluejeans, and boots, and doing the same thing, was his wife, Bonnie. We were almost upon them, calling "hello," before they saw us. The jackhammer stopped, and Dr. and Mrs. Ahrens stepped out of the ditch, put down their shovels, and greeted us. Dr. Ahrens is bald, bespectacled, and tall. His wife is slender, pretty, and blue-eyed, and appeared graceful and ladylike even digging a ditch. We apologized for interrupting their work, and asked if we should look around by ourself—we had noticed that every tree had a label with its name in Latin and English. "Oh, no!" Dr. Ahrens shouted. (The jackhammer had started again.) "Let us show you some of the things we have here."

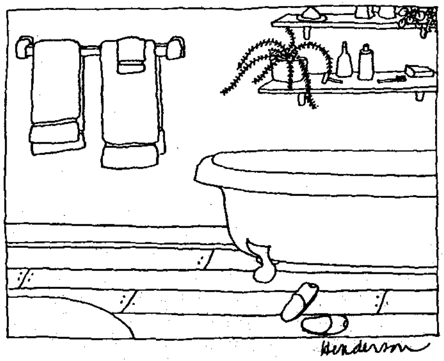
First, the Ahrenses led us around the pond, which is bordered by rocks and boulders ranging in size from substantial to elephantine, most of them dug out of the arboretum soil with a backhoe and pushed or pulled to their places by a bulldozer and a tractor. It had taken four years to prepare the meadow for the first plantings. "That gave me new respect for the pioneers," Dr. Ahrens said. "Can you imagine clearing land without any machines at all?"

The pond, sparkling in the sun and reflecting the trees beyond, looked ornamental, as it is supposed to; its practical purposes are for drainage and to serve as a reservoir during droughts and as an environment for trees and shrubs that like moisture. Beside it was a cluster of such trees—feathery bald cypresses, which, Mrs. Ahrens told us, flourish in the swamps of Georgia. "Most people are surprised to find we can grow them, but they adapt. Up here, they're deciduous—they drop their needles once a year. Down South, they don't."

For the next hour or so, we followed the Ahrenses around the arboretum, becoming acquainted with an international assemblage of young trees, among them a stout little Serbian spruce, whose flat needles are green on their top sides and silvery blue on their undersides, and a Chinese elm, which at this point in its career was a delicate-looking shrub about four feet high, with a host of slender trunks and a few tiny leaves clinging to its thin branches. We saw a bush with yellowing large, flat, oval leaves, which Mrs. Ahrens told us was a deciduous holly. "Most people don't know they exist," she said. We admired some dawn redwoods, deciduous conifers that until the early nineteen-forties, when a stand of them was discovered in China, were thought to be extinct; after the war, botanists from Harvard's Arnold Arboretum arranged to have seeds brought back, and distributed them to growers in the United States.

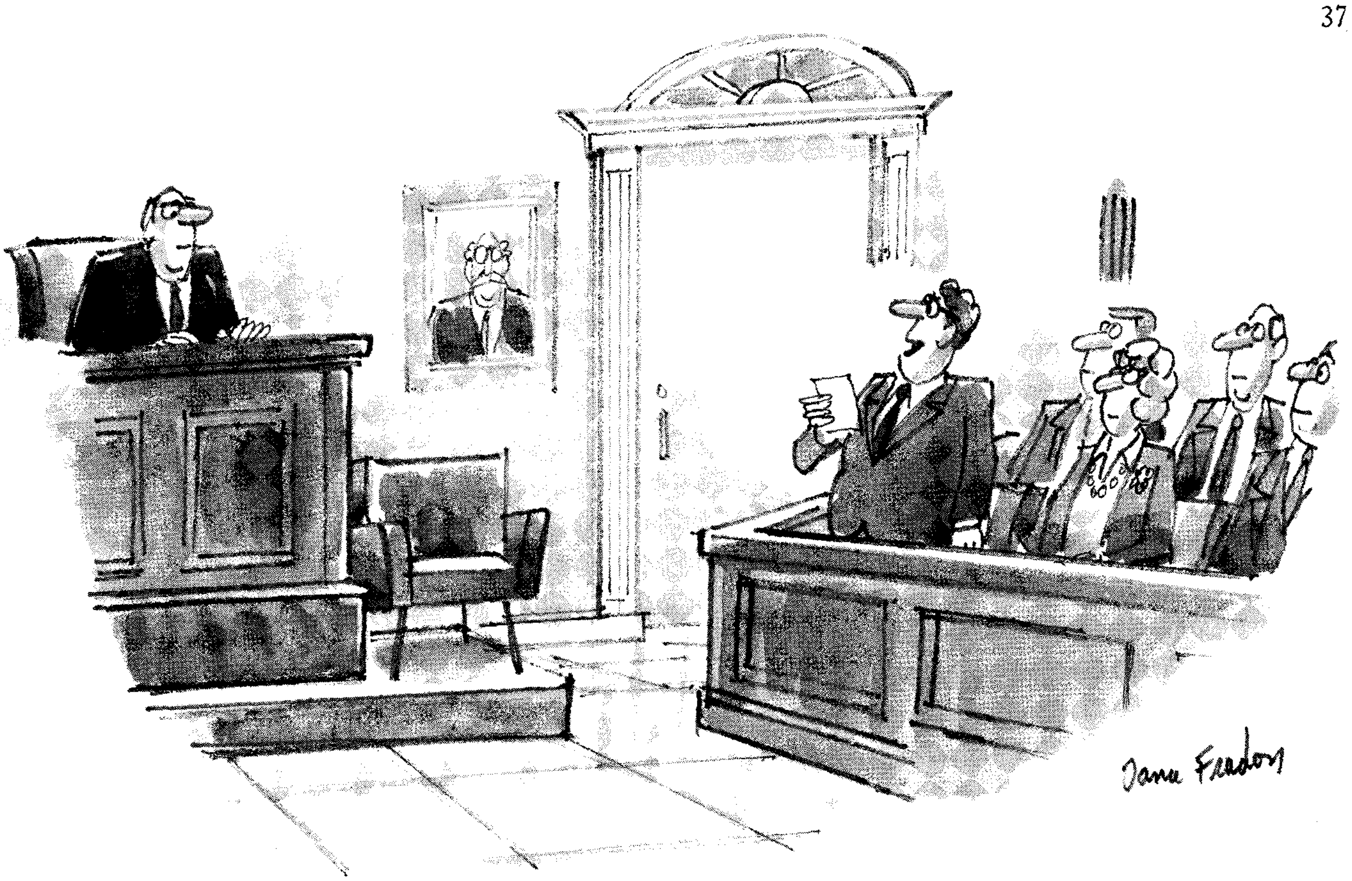
Since the arboretum's earliest plantings date back only to 1981, none of the trees were imposing—most looked fragile, even lacy—but as the Ahrenses led us along we realized that in their minds' eyes we were strolling through allées between majestic groves and lush shrubberies of the future. We learned that, invisibly, charted on a contour map, the arboretum is divided into quadrats, or squares, twenty-five metres on a side, and that all the information about the plantings in each quadrat goes into Rockefeller University's big computer, so that printouts are available to botanists, nurseries, and arboretums that have sent the Ahrenses specimens for testing.

The jackhammer had stopped. Dr. Ahrens looked at his watch. "Lunch," he said. "Bonnie is a whiz at grilling cheese sandwiches, if that's all right with you."



Just across the county road from the arboretum is the Ahrenses' country house, a large building in rustic style, dating from around 1900, with massive stone fireplaces in the living and dining rooms. Over vegetable soup and cheese sandwiches (Mrs. Ahrens added a dab of marmalade), the Ahrenses explained that they had founded the arboretum after they stumbled into an area of scientific ignorance—winter hardiness. They had returned from a sabbatical in England inspired by the artful beauty of English landscape gardening to create something of the sort in the Catskills. They realized that they could not plant the same trees they had admired in England, for their house is twenty-four hundred feet above sea level, winter temperatures go down to thirty below zero, and the snow is often four or five feet deep. However, when the Ahrenses asked what they *could* plant, they found out that nobody knows. Nurserymen and botanists assumed that they could grow whatever was already growing in the mountains, but nothing more. Nobody knows, in strict scientific terms, why different trees grow where they grow. Horticulturists know that, within limits, some plants can adapt to different climates, but the Ahrenses discovered that no one has ever systematically studied those limits. "You saw the Georgia cypresses out there," Dr. Ahrens said. "Some other Southern trees would not survive. Conversely, you could take certain trees that grow well here and move them to Georgia and they wouldn't live. Some trees seem to require a dormant period each year. Nobody knows why."

The existence of so many questions without answers, so many problems without solutions, was irresistible to a scientist. In 1977, Dr. Ahrens used his life savings—about a hundred thousand dollars—to set up a foundation, Onteora Arboretum, Inc., for the study of winter hardiness in trees and shrubs. "People don't even know, at the plant-cell level, what constitutes hardiness," Dr. Ahrens explained, seeming delighted to be faced with such a problem. "There is a theory for every single molecule in the plant itself. None of the theories are proved. One suggests that the cells of hardy plants resist damage by producing their own antifreeze—glycerine, or



"We find the defendant guilty, and, what's more, the Founding Fathers and Ed Meese would have found him guilty, too."

• •

glycerol—to prevent ice crystals from forming, just as the human body manufactures substances to protect itself. Another theory maintains that the chemistry of the cell wall is the determining factor. If it's pliable, it bends instead of breaking when the ice crystals form, so they don't rupture it. Then, there's adaptation. It's not a genetic change. Something is happening within the plant for its own preservation, but we don't know what."

We asked about the mountain soil, and Dr. Ahrens told us it was poor and not more than two feet deep, on average, over the bedrock. "So the trees up here put their roots out sidewise, and they interlock with other trees' roots, forming something like an interwoven mat," he went on. "That's what keeps them from blowing over when the wind is strong." Listening to Dr. Ahrens, we no longer found it remarkable that the Ahrenses were drawn to those enigmas of plant life—survival and adaptability. What was genuinely astonishing was that human beings have been using trees for millennia without understanding them.

Dr. Ahrens hopes to improve the tissue culture of woody materials, the process of cloning trees and shrubs. An infinite number of copies of one tree or shrub, grown in test tubes, can be handled in many different ways—a precious research tool. The technique of plant cloning was invented in the nineteen-twenties by William Robbins, who later became president of the New York Botanical Garden. Dr. Ahrens has a comfortable new emeritus laboratory in the basement of the Rockefeller University hospital, and he is eager to find some time, while the arboretum is coping with winter, to work on tissue culture. "I want to start with mountain laurel," he said. "I'm really a good laboratory hand, if I say so myself. Of course, getting back is really difficult when you haven't been doing your own lab work for ten years—and that's about how long it has been for me. It takes a certain amount of moral fibre to do things—get your hands dirty and make mistakes—when you're used to asking someone else to do them." Dr. Ahrens paused, and then said, "I don't know if I can crack the problem of winter hardiness in the next fifty years, but it will be fun to try."

In the moment's silence that followed that challenge, we all became aware that the jackhammer was rattling again. Dr. Ahrens stood up, and said, "I'll see if he needs help. Bonnie will show you the nursery."

When we stepped out-of-doors, it was perceptibly chillier. The nursery, south of the arboretum, is an area about the size of a tennis court which contains sixteen raised plant beds, two feet high, four feet wide, and fourteen feet long, framed by old railroad ties and lengths of telephone pole. The Ahrenses nurture seedlings in the nursery until they judge them ready for transplanting to the arboretum. "The soil in the beds is much richer than the soil in the arboretum," Mrs. Ahrens said as she led us to a bed at the nursery's south end. "We use a mixture of Solite, which retains moisture, and topsoil and mulch. This bed is particularly interesting, because the plants in it were cloned by a nursery on the West Coast and came to us this summer as three-inch test-tube babies." The little blobs of green included three varieties of laurel and also some azaleas that had been selected in Minnesota and sent to the West Coast for cloning.

We asked how long a plant stayed

in the nursery, and learned that its period of nonage depended on its rate of growth. "This is my favorite bed," Mrs. Ahrens said, leading us to an assortment of little evergreens. "These are all very slow-growing. They've been in the nursery for three years. Some are *Pinus aristata* and others are *Pinus longaeva*—two kinds of bristlecone pine. There are such pines in the Sierras that are five thousand years old." We stared at the seedlings in awe. Their dark-green needles grew in tufts, and some of the seedlings were bushier than others, but none were taller than eight inches. "And that little fir." Mrs. Ahrens pointed to a bristling bundle of green needles perhaps three inches tall. "I don't know if he's going to make it, I really don't. He's been here for three years, and he's been struggling *so* hard."

There is science and then there is sentiment. The concern in Mrs. Ahrens' voice prompted an unscientific question: "Is there any one of these plants that you are really worried about?"

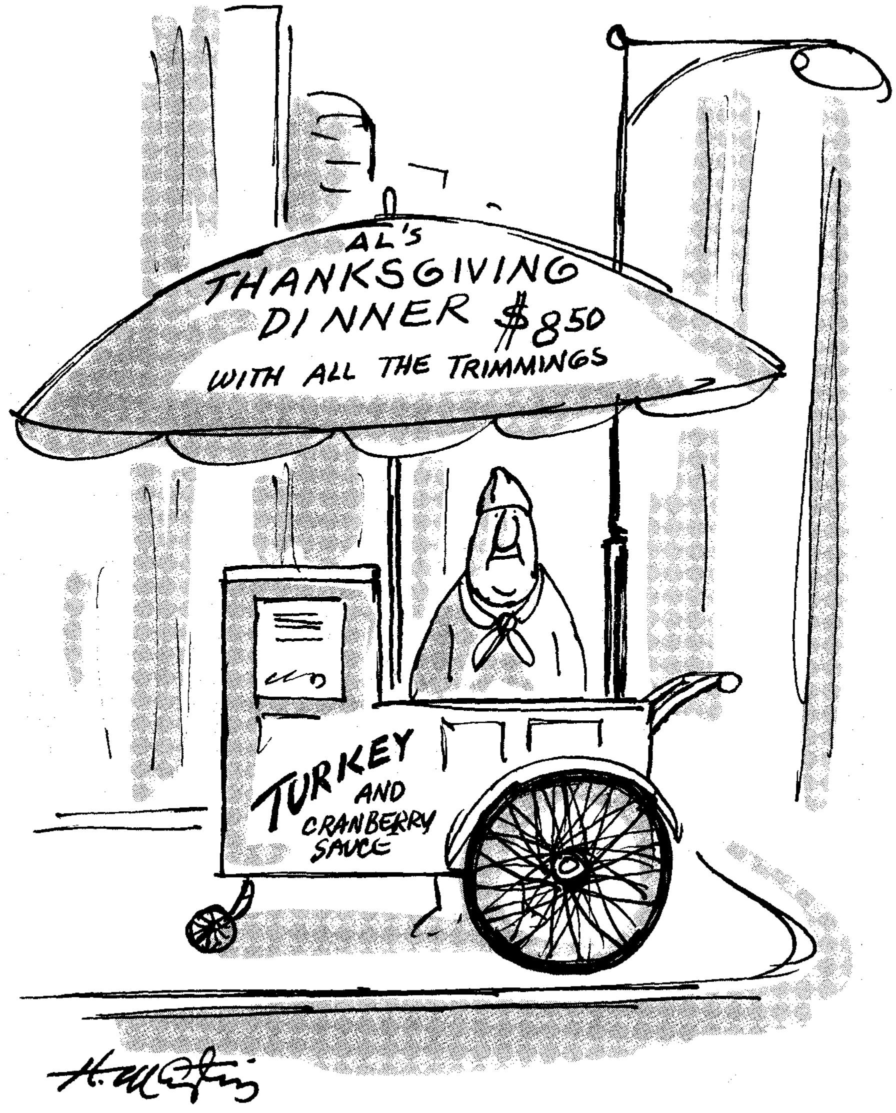
"I'm worried about everybody," she replied.

Report from Missoula

A FRIEND in Missoula, Montana, writes:

Loyalties and logic can sometimes go awry out here in the provinces—especially after a bumpy, unsettled season, during which many things happened that shouldn't have and other things didn't happen that should have.

Perhaps it all really started last season, when our softball team, Montana Review of Books, unexpectedly won the championship of the Missoula Northside Men's League. We are an old team, averaging thirty-six years old, at least. That's far older than the fifteen other teams in the league, many of which have players (real gazelles) young enough to be our offspring—players who have not had time to neglect their bodies as thoroughly as we have neglected ours. But, gasping and sore, we won the thing, squeaking past the last four opponents by a total of four runs and, in the championship game, played under a blazing afternoon sun, whipping our longtime rivals, Eight Ball Billiards, with immaculate fielding and timely hitting. It didn't matter in the least that our trophy was misengraved "Montana Review of Brooks." So this season we were the team to beat. Maybe it was our unusual position as front-runners, and all the pressure that this imposes, such as being expected, by both the press and loved ones, to repeat our performance, that did us in. Maybe it was the constant seething of opposing bench jockeys, yelling things like "Close the Book!" and "Beat the has-beens!" Maybe our age had caught up with us. Maybe the softball gods assumed we had been blessed plenty. Maybe we just were no longer hungry enough. Anyway, we didn't finish so much as collapse, scoring only two earned runs in the last fourteen innings of the season, missing easy fly balls and grounders, and throwing the old horsehide away every chance we got.



It was at our post-season party, though, that things really began to unravel: our right fielder and our starting pitcher both announced their retirement from organized softball. A bit later, two more outfielders turned out to have less formal but no less definite plans to end their playing days. Then our designated hitter moved to Michigan to become a private detective. Our shortstop was seriously entertaining offers to play for another team, which had lost its own shortstop to misadventure, and our second baseman and leading batter discovered he would be gone for the heart of the 1986 season—in Thailand visiting refugee camps. Then came some off-the-field reversals, those events that can so drastically affect a ballplayer's career: our catcher's wife left him, and a sure-thing screenplay deal he was part of dissolved at the last minute; our first baseman—the Buddha, we call him—separated from his live-in girlfriend; our left fielder lost his job, and his wife, who's our scorekeeper, was laid off temporarily from hers; it snowed in early October; our sponsor was forced to withdraw her financial support. It was a bewildered, reeling gang—one facing a drastic rebuilding year, psychic and physical—that gathered to watch the World Series.

Truthfully, none of us had been

hanging on the outcome of either League Championship Series. Dispirited in general, we were without any ties to the four teams playing, although one of us had been to Toronto for a weekend educational conference and another of us had passed through Kansas City on the way to St. Louis for a wedding in 1970 and yet another of us had once attended a Dodger game and met Pearl Bailey there in a beer-concession line. But the World Series was a different matter. We felt, as Americans, as sports fans—indeed, as sportsmen—a compulsion to choose a side, to declare ourselves, to rise above the languid drift of our own lives and stand tall, damn it, even if it should be on the wrong side of the line.

TANGO
ARGENTINO
Lorenz

"Very pleasant, but in answer to your question: No, I don't think tango lessons would draw us closer together."

• •

We opted as one for the Royals. Throwing caution, a wealth of statistics, and our own deeply embedded baseball knowledge aside, we rode to our decision on the breezes of whimsy, cussedness, and hope. Some of us had decided that the Cardinals' emblem (two red birds perched on either end of a bat) looked downright silly. Others realized that Kansas City is closer to Montana than St. Louis is, and thought it should be treated as a neighbor. And all of us, in our malaise, felt an affinity with the lightly regarded American League champs. It wasn't that the Royals were losers; they just seemed less like winners than the Cardinals. We didn't like Tito Landrum—he was far too well spoken and self-assured and untroubled. We didn't like Whitey Herzog—his crewcut reminded us all of former high-school coaches and, in turn, of our former days of glory. We did like Bret Saberhagen, because he seemed to be having so much trouble growing a respectable mustache, and we especially liked Steve (Bye Bye) Balboni, because he was bald, like some of us, and portly, like others of us, and because he seemed to be struggling at the plate, as most of us had all season.

But by the last game, despite the Royals' tenacity, each of us felt, *knew*, that we had come to the end of our string: that we would soon face a winter not only as losers ourselves but as backers of losers—would arrive at our own next season, if we arrived at all, just a bit more fearful of inevitability, a rung lower on the ladder of dreams. We gathered for the final tilt whistling in the dark. To make matters worse, we had become careless at the very moment we should have been most alert. The elaborate but casual ceremonies that had helped us get the Royals this far had been forgotten: we were watching the game not from our catcher's house, where we had watched the others, but from our first baseman's; instead of the beer, cold-cut sandwiches, and chips and salsa we had consumed to date, we found ourselves drinking red wine and eating buffalo-hump roast, broccoli, potatoes, and poppy-seed cake. Most terrible of all, one of us had left his lucky cap back home. We didn't call Dick Howser to apologize for these changes of venue, diet, and talisman, knowing that our news would only distract him. We settled in glumly, aware that we would have only ourselves to blame if our boys lost.

But they didn't. And maybe we won't. And that, we decided after the last fly ball landed in Motley's glove in right field, might be just enough to get us through the imminent long gruel of winter here. Already, things are looking up. Right after the game, back in my living room, a couple of us discovered major flaws in our batting stances and corrected them on the spot. A day or so later, we ran across a pair of hot prospects for next year's team. And, best of all, three scratch-pad pages are taped high on my refrigerator door. The new lineups scrawled on them look to be dynamite. Unbeatable.

THE VONNEGUTENBERG BIBLE: GENESIS I AND SO ON

IN the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, which was not a bad start, considering how things have turned out a trillion years later or so, in 1985 A.D. Nowadays, a substantial majority of His creatures great and small entertain the notion that life is a meaningless nightmare and wonder what was the big idea.

Back then, too. The same question occurred to Cain, who, by the way, did not inherit his mother's sense of humor, when he was spurned for treating God like a vegetarian. And, oh, yes, to Mr. X, who got stoned to death for picking up sticks on the Sabbath. His own mother wouldn't have been able to pick him out of a lineup after a handful or two of brickbats had landed on him.

What was the big idea?

Speaking of big ideas, here is another possibility: the Big Bang. Primum mobile. And then we had the elementary particles, which would be called electrons and protons and neutrons and positrons and bosons and gluons and muons and quarks and so on. The quarks, incidentally, come in five flavors.

Kaboom!

A trillion years ago, in any case, there wasn't any such thing as humankind, and the earth was without form, and void. Like this: as shapeless as a cozy Philadelphia neighborhood after it has been firebombed by the local police force, and emptier than the carcass of a lamb midway on its appointed rounds through a slaughterhouse in the great state of New Jersey. Like the lamb, by the way, I, too, was once in trouble in New Jersey. Agnus Dei.

Those were the days.

And darkness was upon the face of the deep. According to one school of thought, it should have stayed there. And then there would never have been any Aztec Indians to wake up one morning and find themselves face to face with the sallow, civic-minded Spanish explorer Hernando Cortez, who would torture them and destroy their civilization. For one thing. Yes, and my father would not have climbed into his rowboat at daybreak on June 14, 1931, singing "Awake, awake to love and work, the lark is in the sky." Little did I know that he was about to stick his oars in the water and row out of my sight forever.

The thing is: Another school of thinkers has it that there would have been no Platonic dialogues and no laborsaving devices and no Halley's comet if darkness had remained upon the face of the deep. If I may put in my two cents: There would have been no schools of thought, and what's so bad about that? Just asking.

Back then, the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, which would be named the Pacific Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean and the Indian Ocean and the Arctic Ocean and the Panama Canal and the Gulf of Mexico and the East River and so on. So far, so good. He was a supremely successful Creator. The Gulf of Mexico, incidentally, would be where Hernando Cortez would move across the face of the waters to meet the Aztecs on Holy Thursday, 1519. And, no, the East River is not a river. It is a salt-water estuary. These are two examples of how things can go wrong on a planet of thinkers. Another one: When my father took off at daybreak, I thought he was just going fishing.

Three wrongs don't make a right.

Thanks a lot, Spirit of God.

The thing is: God is a Supreme Being who would eventually get around to filling the sea with fish, not to mention creating man in His own image. In the image of God created He him. Yes, that includes me, and I, too, am omnipotent in my own way. Yes, and we both like our little jokes. We both have a love-hate relationship with the Creation.

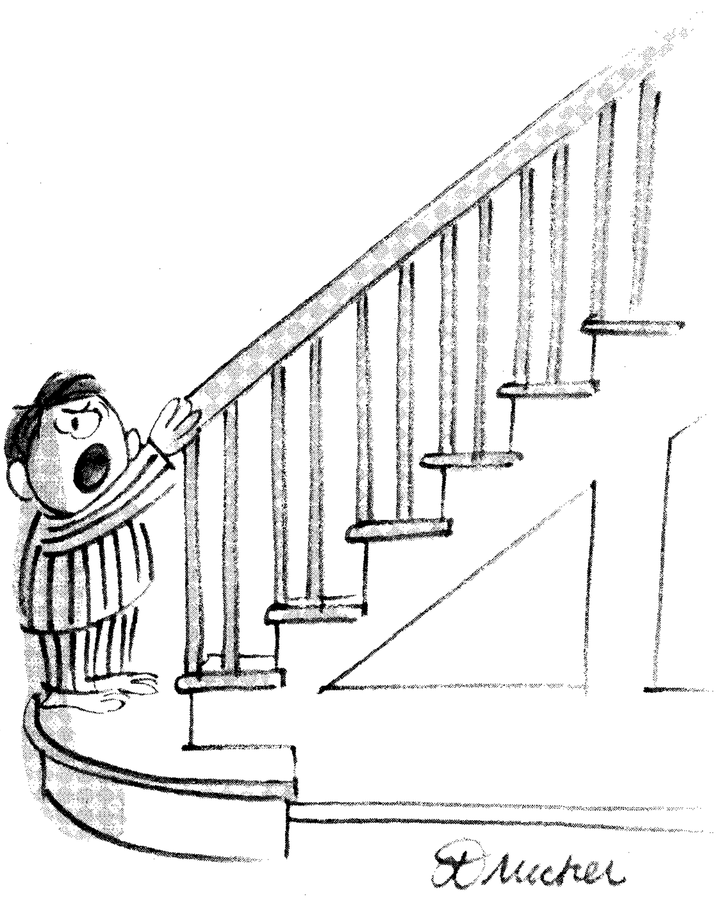
BUT first God said, "Let there be light," not in the English language of today, which I am using to tell His story. What He said was "יְהִי־אוֹר" or words to that effect. Little did He know that a simple phrase like that would end up in any number of books of famous quotations, and He was only talking to Himself at the time.

Dare I say it: He wasn't psychic.

Here is what I think: The evening and the morning were the first day and the evening and the morning were the second day and the evening and the morning were the third day and on and on. What was there to show for it at that point? The firmament, dry land, grass, herb yielding seed after His own kind. The thing is, I began to get impatient looking over God's shoulder, waiting for the good part: the Fall of Man.

Fidget, fidget, itch, itch.

God called the dry land Earth, incidentally, and the gathering to-



"And good night to all my critics!"

gether of the waters called He Seas. Splash, splash, glub, glub.

Hey, Pop, where you goin'?

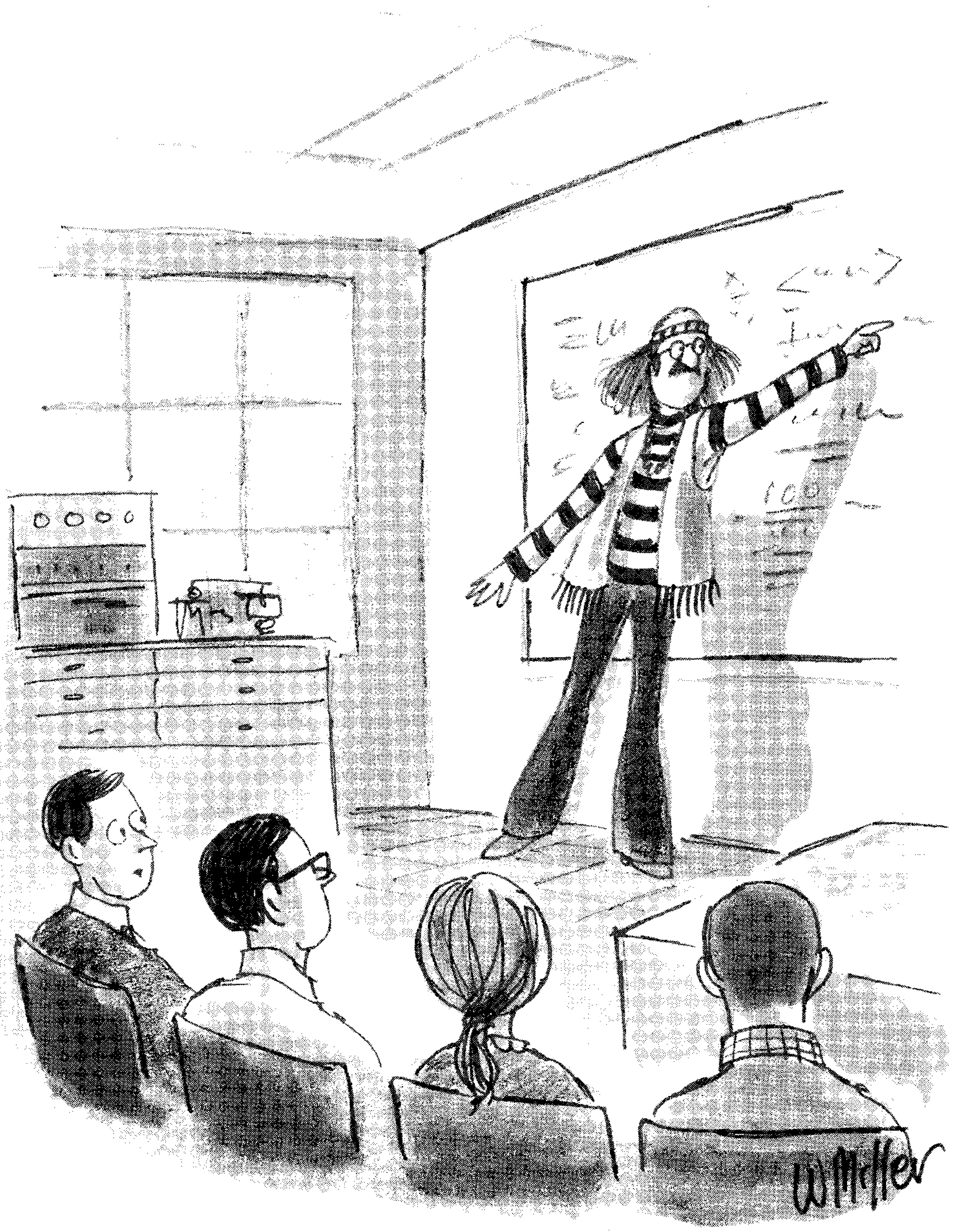
There's one thing I'm not: omniscient. I haven't got the faintest idea where he went.

To give God His due: It wasn't entirely His fault that June 14, 1931, was the worst day of my life. Let me be perfectly clear: Twelve and a half per cent of the population of the universe were uninterrupted in their pursuit of happiness that day.

Have a nice day.

What is home without a father, eh, God?

Believe it or not: By the time the evening and the morning were the third or fourth day, I had learned my lesson. It may be that by that time I knew more than any human being ever would know about futility. Nowadays, pessimism is cheap. Back then, when I felt the first stirrings of tender gloom, the Lord God hadn't even got around to making to grow the tree of knowledge of good and evil, not to mention the woman who took of the fruit thereof and gave also unto her husband with her and so on. At about the time that those two were making their great contribution to the fate of humankind, I began to have the following premonitions: botulism and stress and inoperable sociopathy and holiday blues and aulophobia and strip mining and assorted venereal diseases and censorship and World Wars I, II, III, IV and on and on.



"Great professor. Dresses kind of odd, though, doesn't he?"

• •

Tell me, tell me: Who wrote the Book of Lists?

And, oh, yes, pretty soon I had been around long enough to have figured out how to create characters out of thin air and inflate them with foolish hopes and know all the time that they are going to eat that very apple you told them not to eat and start covering up their genitalia with fig-leaf aprons.

The thing was: From that day on, all sorts of chemical fertilizers and broad-spectrum insecticides would be required to make a garden grow. Little did the unhappy couple know that the first fruit of their loins would become the most notorious murderer under the firmament. Adam, incidentally, would suffer from a low sperm count, so that despite decades of sexual intercourse he would not achieve fatherhood again until he was one hundred and thirty years old. And Eve would be consigned to the gray anonymity of the Old Age Home of History and never be heard from again. One more thing: Before he died, at the ripe old age of nine hundred and thirty, the father of the human race would beget sons and daughters who, he hoped, would build a better world.

Fat chance.

Among his descendants, by the way, was my old man.

And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.

Dare I add: Little did He know.

Those were the days.

—SUSAN LARDNER

•

BLOCK THAT METAPHOR!

[*Brant Mewborn in Rolling Stone*]

A typical tempest in a teapot provoked by that rock & roll whipping boy, the musical mulatto working the musical no man's land of blue-eyed soul. A classic Catch-22.

SPELLS

IT'S Daria's thirtieth birthday party. There are fifteen or twenty people in the room; I don't know most of them. My boyfriend, Stash, and I sit on the couch and watch her open her presents: the gift from us of a Godzilla lighter (flames shoot out of Godzilla's mouth); a record of Maria Callas singing "Norma;" a silk survival map of the Arctic Circle; a glue gun; a cassette of Teenage Jesus and the Jerks; a large, black plastic object with a pink pyramid-shaped cover (possibly made by the Memphis design collective), which might be a breadbox or an ice bucket; an eight-pound bag of Eukanuba health food for dogs; a book about wrestling; and a Statue of Liberty hat—a spiky helmet of flexible foam. Daria puts it on.

I know that this assortment of gifts means something specific and symbolic about people my age who live in New York and are involved with the arts. A list of gifts received by a flapper in the Jazz Age could tell you things about the period, and this stuff has significance as well. But what the gifts actually represent I have no idea.

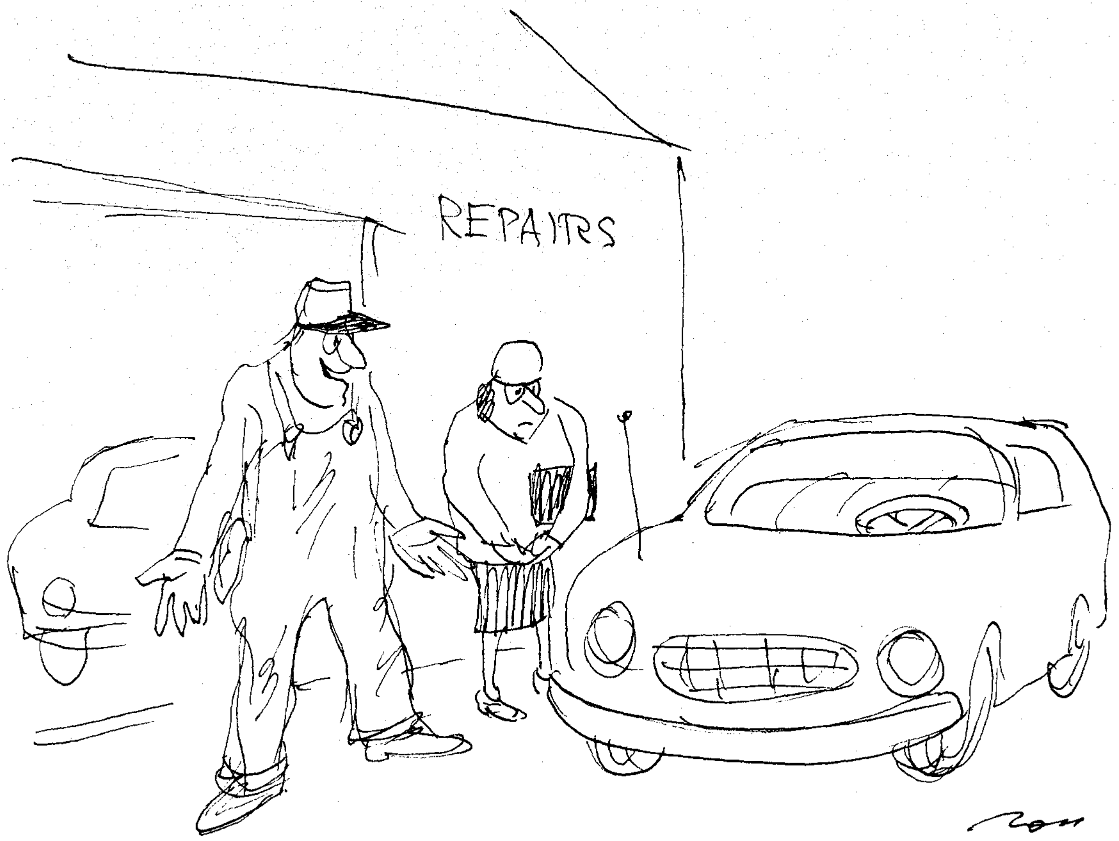
Daria's dog, Textron, half collie and half greyhound, is in bad shape: he's very elderly, and ten years ago he was injured in some sort of accident. Now his back legs are partially paralyzed and frequently give out from under him, some of the fur is missing from his tail, and he has a drooling problem. On the other hand, he's a happy animal; at the party, he lies on the rug wagging his tail and grinning. He has a long snout and tartar-stained teeth. Daria must have some positive character traits, since she's kept Textron alive and happy in the city; it can't be easy to walk him.

After Daria opens the presents, I make a point of finding a seat on the opposite side of the room from Stash: at parties, he likes me to be independent. As soon as I get up, Daria comes over and sits down next to Stash. He looks very animated; I watch him lean forward, almost touching Daria's legs with his own.

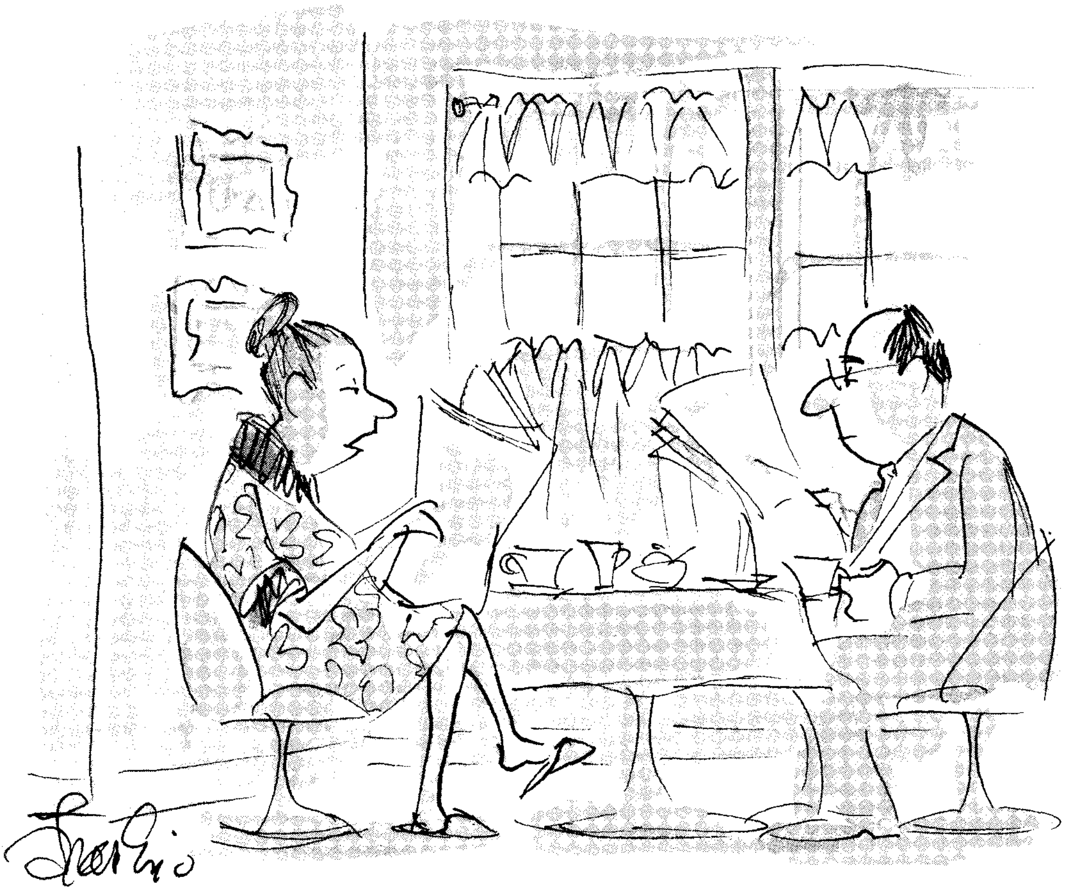
I start to plan his funeral. This is something I do rarely, when the mistral—or some kind of violent wind—blows in from Long Island. At times like this everyone in New York behaves bizarrely, like a bunch of sparrows that have pecked up a spill of rye bread infected with ergot fungus. Of course, I'll be devastated when the phone call comes informing me of his abrupt demise—taxi accident—yet eventually I'll make the adjustment. I think how upsetting it must have been for Lee Krasner to be told of Jackson Pollock's death in a car crash (especially since he was with two women at the time). It will probably take me at least a year to get over the trauma, though of course everyone will be extremely kind to me, inviting me out to dinner parties, et cetera, and I'll be very busy managing his estate.

Stash and Daria would make a cute couple. They are both so blond and beefy. Daria is attractive, in her tight-fitting dress with the holes cut out in the back and stomach. But her art is nothing to look at. I get up and walk around the room to examine its contents: a sort of candelabra thing made from bent pink metal and ornamented with cherubs; a piece of wire twisted into a Picasso-head silhouette; a rococo door studded with plaster figures of satyrs made from molds, like a summer-camp crafts project. I'm mildly horrified. The stuff reminds me of the decoration to be found in some Italian restaurant in Brooklyn. Yet Daria obviously intends no irony. I can hear Stash—he's a painter, much more well known than Daria—telling her how much he likes her work.

I go over to the table. There's a display of various cakes, each with a little sign to indicate the type: Grand Marnier; a mocha buttercream; an apple tart; and a homemade coconut cake shaped like a hat and fringed with white shreds and flecked with brown dots. It's wonderful to see so many cakes all lined up like that. Sometimes, for recreational purposes, I sit and read an old cookbook. It belonged to my grandmother and is falling apart, but it's filled with fascinating recipes for cakes that



"It's bound to make funny little noises, Mrs. Holmes. It's a funny little car."



"Notice how it's been all downhill ever since they opened King Tut's tomb?"

require twelve eggs and a pound of butter and cups of nuts ground to a fine paste, and that have names like Mürb Teig, Lady Baltimore, Lalla Rookh, and Lebkuchen.

Daria's mother, Lacey, comes up. "This is the one I made," she says, pointing to the coconut cake.

"Then I must try it," I say. I eat a forkful. What a disappointment! The cake is illusory—it looks like a gooey, fluffy coconut cake, but some basic ingredient, such as sugar or coconut, has been left out. "Delicious," I say.

I go back over to Stash. "Stash, I think we should leave pretty soon," I say. I notice his legs are now pressed up against Daria's.

He looks annoyed. "In a while, Eleanor," he says.

I'm worrying about whether I should sit down next to him and join in the conversation, when Lacey leads me off by the arm.

"I lent her my car for six months," she says, sitting me down in an uncomfortable butterfly chair, "and when I came into the city to pick it up I found that the whole right side was smashed in. Now, what can you do with a girl like that?"

The record on the stereo is so loud I can barely hear what she's saying. "I don't know," I say.

"How do you like her dress?" Lacey says. "Stephen Sprouse. Believe it or not, it's made out of cotton, but the label said to dry-clean only. I said, 'Daria, forget the dry cleaning, you'll throw it in the sink.' A three-hundred-dollar cotton dress."

"She looks good in it," I say. The chorus of the song on the record is a girl singing, "It's all my fault." Daria's mother's hips wiggle from side to side to the music. Her date, Mr. Arnazian, watches with admiration. He's a short man, seventyish, with thick glasses and suntanned skin. He hands me a glass of champagne, and I sip it quickly. It's like drinking freeze-dried headache. Lacey starts dancing with Mr. Arnazian.

I see a girl I know; she has a heavy Iron Curtain accent and owns a hair salon, a trendy place with barbershop chairs and paintings that incorporate hair clippings of famous customers.

"I always meant to ask you—where are you from?" I say. "Originally."

"Where am I from?" she says. "Where am I from? What kind of question is that?"

Is my question in terrible taste, or is she crazy? It's hard for me to figure out how to be a social being; I'm alone all day with Andrew, our Dalmatian, working on my jewelry designs, or at the East Village newspaper where I have a part-time job doing copy editing in a closet.

I do get to have one real conversation: Daria's boyfriend, Simon, talks to me about the tickets he has to a private screening of a remake of a zombie movie. Simon's cousin played a zombie in the original film. I tell Simon how, generally speaking, I'm not a moviegoer. It makes me uneasy to sit in a chair in the dark. I can't say this to Stash, because it would make him mad to think of how many movies he has taken me to.

As Stash and I leave, Daria says, "Good night, Stash. I'll call you tomorrow about going to meet Victor."

"What was that about?" I say in the elevator.

"I'm going to try and help Daria get a gallery," Stash says. "Her stuff is good, don't you think?"

I don't answer.

When we get down to the lobby I feel a little queasy. "Hold on a second," I say. I totter over to a vinyl love seat. "Let me sit down." I figure I'm probably the first person in forty years to make use of the lobby. I see the source of Daria's influences: the lobby has Plexiglas chandeliers and a grimy fountain without water.

"What's wrong?" Stash says.

"For a second there, I felt a little dizzy," I say. "Fine now. Let's go." I stand up.

On the street I only manage about a block before the smell gets to me. There's an awful lot of garbage on the street: some bags have broken

THE RACE

When I got to the airport I rushed up to the desk
and they told me the flight was cancelled. The doctors had
said my father would not live through the night
and the flight was cancelled. A young man with a
dark blond mustache told me
another airline had a non-stop
leaving in seven minutes—see that
elevator over there well go
down to the first floor, make a right you'll
see a yellow bus, get off at the
second Pan Am terminal—I
ran, I who have no sense of direction
raced exactly where he'd told me, like a fish
slipping upstream deftly against the
flow of the river. I jumped off that bus with my
heavy bags and ran, the bags
wagged me from side to side as if to
prove I was under the claims of the material, I
ran up to a man with a white flower on his breast,
I who always go to the end of the line, I said
Help me. He looked at my ticket, he said make a
left and then a right go up the moving stairs and then
run. I raced up the moving stairs
two at a time, at the top I saw the
long hollow corridor and
then I took a deep breath, I said
goodbye to my body, goodbye to comfort, I
used my legs and heart as if I would
gladly use them up for this, to
touch him again in this life. I ran and the
big heavy dark bags
banged me, wheeled and swam around me like
planets in wild orbits—I have seen
pictures of women running down roads with their
belongings tied in black scarves
grasped in their fists, running under serious
gray historical skies—I blessed my
long legs he gave me, my strong
heart I abandoned to its own purpose, I
ran to Gate 17 and they were
just lifting the thick white
lozenge of the door to fit it into the
socket of the plane. Like the man who is not
too rich, I turned to the side and
slipped through the needle's eye, and then I
walked down the aisle toward my father. The jet was
full and people's hair was shining, they were
smiling, the interior of the plane was filled with a
mist of gold endorphin light,
I wept as people weep when they enter heaven,
in massive relief. We lifted up
gently from one tip of the continent and
did not stop until we set down lightly on the
other edge, I walked into his room and
watched his chest rise slowly and
sink again, all night
I watched him breathe.

—SHARON OLDS

• •

open, and chicken bones clutter the sidewalk. Around the rim of my vision, things are starting to go dusty and curl up. "I'm not too good," I say. "Let's just lean against the car over there."

"How much champagne did you drink?"

"One glass," I say. I'm in a cold sweat. "I just can't continue," I tell him, ripping off my raincoat.

"Well, if you don't feel good, let's at least go home," he says.

"I can't move," I say, and sit down on the sidewalk. "If I stand up, I'm going to faint." I know Stash must be getting miffed. I stand up and stumble a few feet further down the block. "I believe I'll just sit on these steps for a few minutes," I say. To my surprise I lie down across the bottom step. There are times when the body just takes control. Certainly its actions have nothing to do with me.

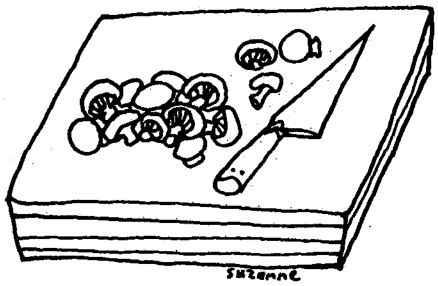
"What are you doing?" Stash says. "You can't stay there."

"I can't move," I say. "I can't walk. You're going to have to get a taxi."

Stash flags one down. He has to help me up and into the cab. "We'd like to go two blocks away," he tells the driver.

I lie straight across the back seat, utterly blitzed; the symptoms are faintness, weakness, perspiration, and general malaise. I once knew a girl who married three times and fainted at every single wedding. But I can tell that my problem isn't psychological: although my body has intrigued against me, my mind is clear as Waterford crystal.

Stash pays the driver and half carries me into the building. I have to lie on the floor while we wait for the elevator. "You better go see my doctor," Stash says. "If I hadn't been there with you, and you were alone, lying across the sidewalk, you could have been in big trouble. Are you going to go to my doctor tomorrow?"



I stretch out on the bed. It's as if I've been hypnotized, or fallen into a trance. "Uh," I say. "Something's wrong with me. I don't think I'm the same person anymore."

"Why don't you listen to me? That does it. We're going to go to the emergency room right now."

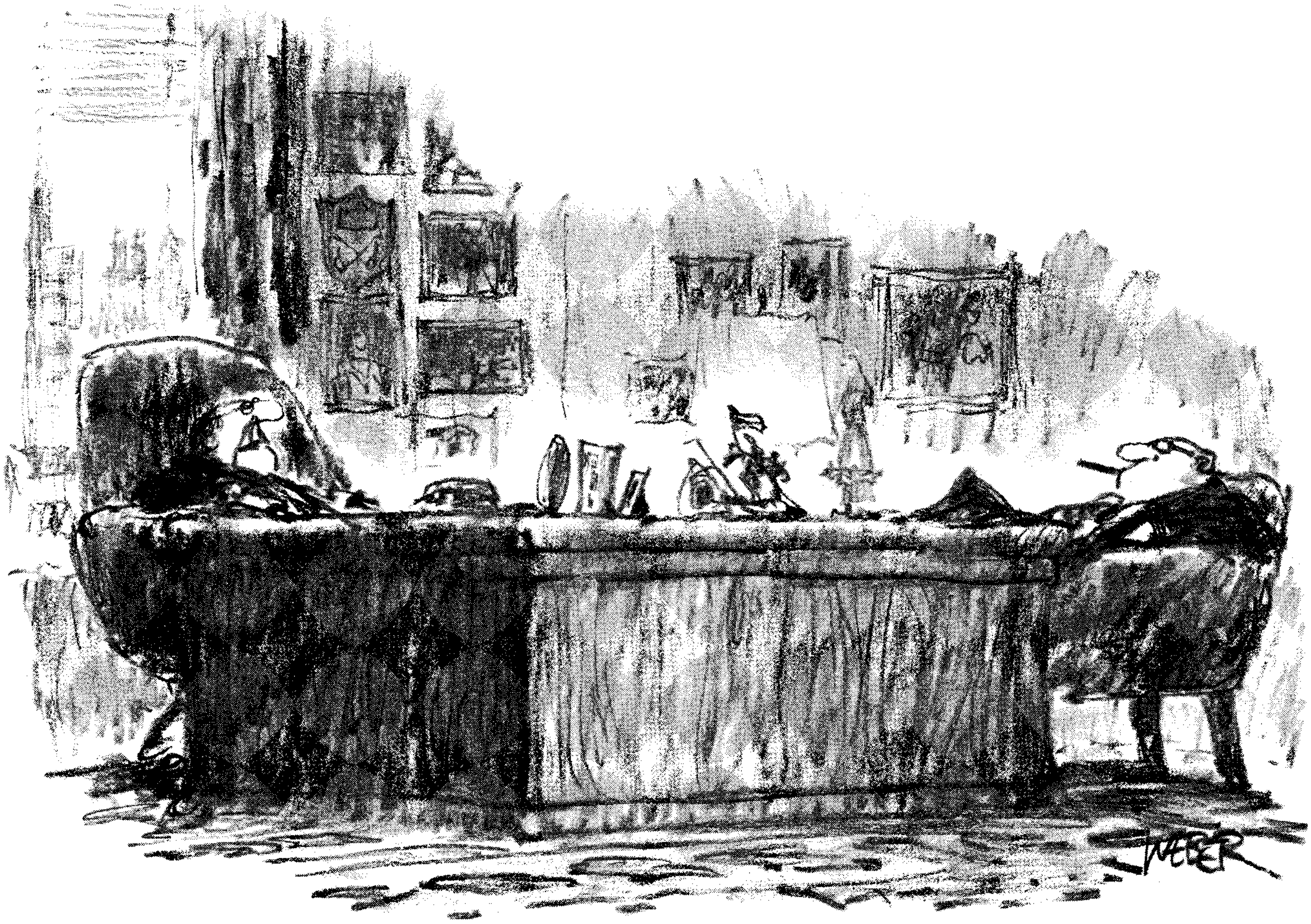
"No, no," I say. "I'll go to a doctor tomorrow. I will. I promise. I'm feeling much better now. But will you please walk the dog tonight? I don't think I can make it."

"How many pieces of cake did you eat, anyway?"

"Three or four. But I'm telling you, they weren't big pieces."

Although I feel fine the next morning, I make an appointment at the clinic I belong to. Stash is displeased when I tell him I won't be able to see a doctor until next Tuesday. It's a real effort for him to keep his mouth shut, but I'm proud of him. The minor strains of living with another person are almost unbearable. That much I understand.

IT'S fun standing on line with Stash for the special screening of the zombie movie, up near Forty-second



"Murray, I love you. And, coming from me, that's a compliment."

• •

Street: I recognize lots of people from night clubs. Daria and Simon are already waiting. Daria seems perfect, in her Nehru jacket, unwrinkled, a dab of gold gloss on her lips, her large Op Art earrings dangling from clean ears. By comparison—though it's true I'm much skinnier—I feel sooty, a Dickensian waif with hunched shoulders and a greasy sweatshirt. Maybe I'm exaggerating. Of course, if we could switch brains for a minute, I probably would find that she feels like a big galoot next to a delicate me. Well, once again I am silently rambling on. I have to reel myself back in like a fish.

"You look very handsome," I tell Simon. He's wearing a tremendous suit jacket—it must be ten or fifteen sizes too large for him—made of some shiny blue material like wallpaper, with a raised velvet paisley design.

"Thanks," he says. "I'm in shock. I was arrested for littering this afternoon."

"Really?" I say. "What happened?"

"I was walking on Wall Street and I dropped my apple core in a flower bed. I swear, I don't know what's going on in this city—it's like some kind of voodoo. The next thing I knew, a person dressed like a meter maid was giving me a ticket. I tried to explain that an apple core was biodegradable, and would provide fertilizer for the flowers, but she wouldn't have any part of it."

As we go into the theatre there's a mass scramble for seats, but we finally find four in a row. While we wait for the movie to begin, I nudge Stash. "Don't you think I'm different now?" I say.

Stash rolls his eyes.

"What?" Simon says, leaning forward in his seat next to Stash.

"Have you noticed my personality has changed?" I say. "I think I'm more outgoing."

"Yes, yes, I have noticed," Simon says. "I thought you seemed more outgoing, and I really felt glad, because I like to talk to you, but there usually seems to be a wall separating you from . . ." His voice trails off.

"A wall separating me," I say, pleased with this image. I realize, however, that Simon is simply supplying me with what he thinks I want to hear: certainly I've never found it terribly difficult to talk to him.

I remember how once Simon came up to me on the street, at a traffic light, and said, "Hello, you old rattlesnake." I jumped about a foot in the air. Then he said, "What's wrong? Why do you look that way?"

I told him I wasn't used to being called an old rattlesnake. "I thought for a second you were the East Village Rapist," I said. He was terribly embarrassed. I guess I had made him feel stupid.

During the credits, while the audience is cheering, I have a real craving for mocha-chip ice cream, and whisper to Stash, "Could we go out for ice cream afterwards? To Big Top's?"

"Maybe," Stash says.

But during the movie, while the

zombies are devouring living human flesh, I start to feel guilty about our dietary habits. Since Stash only wanted cake for dinner, I just heated an old slice of mushroom pizza for myself. This type of meal probably should not be rewarded with dessert, but after the movie Stash suggests to Simon and Daria that we all go somewhere for ice cream. I would have liked some acknowledgment for coming up with the idea; I don't say anything, though.

“Big Top's is really one of my favorite places,” I tell everyone when we are seated in a booth. There's something so reassuring about being in here. The boxes of stale chocolate-covered caramels arranged at the cash register behind us, the Muzak—nothing bad, aside from poor service and lousy food, could ever happen here.

Stash can't figure out what to order. “I don't know whether to get dinner or dessert,” he says. “I took a nap before we went out, and when I woke up I had angel food cake.”

“Mmm,” Daria says. “I haven't had angel food cake in years. Who made it?”

“I did,” I say.

“You make angel food cake?” Simon says. “Boy, that's really something. She's really something, Stash.”

I keep my mouth shut and merely look modest: I don't admit that I made the cake from a mix. Honestly, it tastes better than the same thing made from scratch. A girlfriend of mine works in a restaurant where spectacular angel food cake is served. I begged her to steal the recipe, and she confided that the cake came from a packaged mix. The one time I tried to make the cake from scratch, I used twelve eggs and ended up with a new plastic product. Stash thought it was delicious: he likes rubbery foods in a big way.

“How can you not be able to figure out what to order when the selection here is so marvellous?” I say. “For example, the Wizard's Fried Clams have always been a favorite of mine.”

“Really?” Stash says. “That's funny. That's what I was thinking of getting. But do you think it's safe?”

“What you're getting is something frozen and reconstituted,” I say.

“Daria, would *you* order the Wizard's Fried Clams?” Stash says.

I'm irritated that he's asking her. Why would she know more about the safety of the clams than I do?

At the last minute Stash decides to have B.L.T. on white toast, and Simon says, “That sounds good. I think that's what I'll get, too.”

“Very good,” the waiter says. He's about our age, and resembles a stand-up comedian in a Catskills resort: reedy mustache, red bow tie, a tic in one eye.

“What kind of bread do you have?” Simon says.

“We have rye, wheat, and white. Good choice, excellent choice!” the waiter says. He notices we're all looking at him—he's like a sorcerer's apprentice. “Well,” he says nervously, “there were only three possibilities available to you for a B.L.T. sand.—rye, wheat, or white. Of course, some people don't get bread at all. Do you want bread?”

“A B.L.T. without bread?” Simon says.

“Sure,” the waiter says. “Didn't you ever hear of a tuna sand., hold the sand.?” I love how he calls a sandwich a sand. He goes on, half mumbling, “That means the person just wants tuna on a bed of lettuce.”

“I'll have my B.L.T. on rye toast,” Simon says.

“Here we call rye ‘Robert.’ ”

“Not ‘Roger’?” Simon says.

“ ‘Robert.’ ”

“O.K. then, a B.L.T. on Robert and a Heineken.”

“Something to drink with that?”

“To drink with the Heineken?” Simon says, peeved.

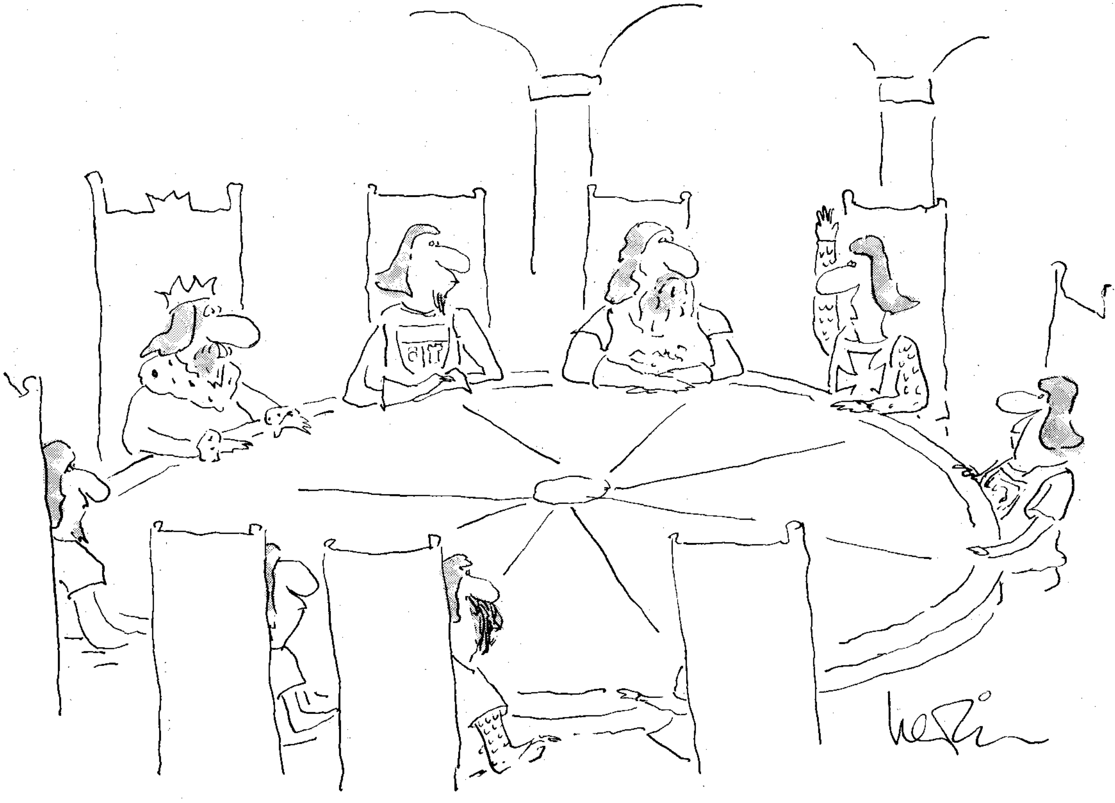
“Oh. I didn't hear that,” the waiter says.

Daria and Stash give each other a look.

“And I'd like a soda,” I say, since no one asks. “I'd like to have mocha-chip ice cream and chocolate syrup.” I figure part of my new personality is to make my wants known.

“Wait,” the waiter says. “We only have milkshakes, and they're pre-made—there's only a choice of three flavors. It's a bottled mix.”

“I'm very disappointed,” I say. “But in that case I'll have a tuna sand.” This isn't what I want at all, but it's good when it comes; in fact, the tuna salad is like a shot of heroin and



“How about some little pads and pencils?”

goes right into my bloodstream. I look at Daria and think, Go ahead, make my life easier. "Your dog," I say. "How did it happen?"

"Oh, he was hit by a car," Daria says. "He was only two years old then. Of course, it was my fault; I should never have let him off the leash. Anyway, I was hysterical, and my husband at the time wrapped him up and we took him off to the veterinary college. At first they said it was hopeless, but Textron didn't try to bite anyone, which is unusual for a dog in that much pain. The veterinary college was extremely impressed with his disposition; they decided to try and treat him, and though the work they did on him should have cost three thousand dollars, they said they wouldn't charge us. In fact, they wanted to keep Textron to conduct experiments on—because of his disposition."

Daria wants to know if we are going to Sakhalin Island afterward: there's going to be a party at the club for the director of the zombie film.

Before Stash can say anything, I speak. "I don't think so," I say. "If I go out tonight, tomorrow's a lost cause."

COOKBOOKS
JUST ARRIVED

"Sixteen-ninety-five seems like an awful lot of money for a first novel."

• •

"I was going to go, but I guess now I won't, either," Daria says. "I put on high heels and everything. But maybe I'm too tired."

I cross my legs and feel what I think is Daria's knee pressed against Stash's—but maybe it's only a table protrusion.

Stash drinks a chocolate milkshake while he smokes a little cigar. He asks Daria if she remembers his old girlfriend, Andy.

"Oh, sure—Andy Dime. I see her name a lot these days," Daria says.

Stash says that Andy got to be very successful because she worked hard all the time.

"I like to rest, myself," I say.

"In fact, Andy worked harder at costume design than anyone else I ever knew," Stash says. "From 6 A.M. until 5 P.M. she worked, then she would go to dance class. Then she would have dinner—vegetarian—and then we would go out dancing until three in the morning."

"Amazing," I say.

"Maybe I won't go to the club, either," Simon says.

"You can share a cab with me," Daria says. "You'll drop me off at home first."

There's silence. I can hear Stash guzzling through his straw. "Great special effects in the movie, huh?" I say. No one answers. "Like where that head got chopped? With the eyes?"

"Yeah," Simon finally answers.

WHILE we're looking for a taxi, near a video arcade, a policeman waving a gun comes running toward us and knocks into Simon. Then he dashes into the arcade.

Simon is white. "A gun!" he says. "He crashed into me with a gun!"

I tug Stash's arm. "This isn't a good place to stand," I say.

There are no cabs in sight. A couple of Buddhists (maybe they're Zen monks) walk by in front of us, dressed in very plain and beautiful robes. I wonder what they're doing in this part of town so late at night. I'm tempted to go over to the chief monk and ask him to give me a koan, but probably he doesn't speak English.

When we finally grab a taxi, Stash says he thinks maybe we'll go to the film party; in fact, he's definitely going. He starts to tell the driver, "But we'll be making a stop first, at—" when Daria interrupts.

"If you guys are going to Sakhalin Island, then maybe I'll come with you," she says.

I don't say anything. I take out my little mirror from my pocketbook and check to make sure I'm still here, then I put on more eyeliner and lipstick.

It's not so bad at the club, after

all. Actors, dressed like zombies, stagger around with trays of Zombies: fancy drinks with four or five types of alcohol, in drinking bowls that resemble coconuts and skulls. Daria and Simon go off to the room where there's dancing, and Stash and I go to the room with the piranhas in the fish tank and say hello to people that we know. As usual when I go to a club, I can't hear a word anyone says; all I can do is grin and try to nod at the right places. Since Stash gets involved talking to an old friend about the Velvet Underground and I don't know too much about the topic, I lean against the wall and sip a Zombie. As the room gets hotter and more crowded, I start to get weak. Once again my peripheral vision is gathering detritus.

I pull Stash by the arm. "Hey, listen," I say. "I feel weird. I think I'm going to faint again. I'm going to go sit down."

Stash is in the middle of a sentence. He looks distracted. "O.K., O.K.," he says.

"I'll be over there," I say, pointing to some chairs. Unfortunately, all the chairs are taken. Once again I'm in a cold sweat. I kick a man gently in the ankles. "Excuse me," I say. "I'm in trouble. I'm going to faint." I'm embarrassed, but feel I have no choice.

The man, dressed in what appear to be silk pajamas, stands up immediately. "Sit down, honey," he says. "Are you pregnant?"

"No," I say. "I just feel faint. I know I'll be O.K. in a chair."

"I was going anyway," the man says.

I put my head down between my knees and feel the blood rush around like a herd of buffalo trapped at the edge of a cliff. I'm better almost at once, but I'm afraid to get up again, especially if it means losing my seat. I enjoy just watching the scene. A boy with long hair, wearing leopard-skin leotards and white lipstick, is busy taking pictures of another man dressed as Captain Hook. Then I study a girl who is wearing a Victorian dress, complete with bustle—she's got on Day-Glo red mascara. On her shoulder is a parrot, but whether it's stuffed or alive I can't tell. I watch the crowd for hours; in fact, I float into a sort of trance, and when I look at my watch it's after 2 A.M.

I spot Stash on the other side of the room: he and Daria are leaning against a railing near the piranha tank. The room is too crowded to push my way through to them. I try to catch Stash's eye, but he's busy talking. Finally, he sees me. I wave at him, trying to make him understand I want him to come over to me, but he doesn't move.

Around three, Stash is ready to leave. In the taxi, he wants to know what's wrong with me. "You don't talk to people, you sit in a chair all night," he says. "Daria said to me, 'What's wrong with Eleanor? She looks terrible.' "

I don't even know most of his friends' addresses, to notify them about the funeral. Maybe I should request, "In lieu of flowers, contributions to the Museum of Modern Art." "My behavior is my business," I say. "I'm not a performing dolphin; I act as I please." My words sound feeble even to me. I try not to be so sensitive; at least I don't burst into tears, the way I did in the early years of our relationship.

In our apartment Stash is silent, and it makes me sad to go to sleep without getting a chance to analyze every person we've bumped into that night. I picture the room getting blacker, beginning at the edges and gradually disappearing into a hole resembling a bathtub drain.

CORAL WASHED UP AT GOLINDANO, VENEZUELA

Here is a lumpy chunk of gray matter
Pitched onto the beach at an off angle,
Bringing the light across its crevasses
So that it glints, changing whimsically
Its matte surfaces to reflective silver,
The reflecting ones back into umbra,
In and among grottoes and worn arcades
Lined in shards and splinters of battered shell,
And spiral staircases cut at cross-section
Running down in terraces to the reef edge:
An abandoned colony on a hillside,
Some barbarian principality
Where a stray or an outlaw from the mollusk beds
Could home into harbor, hitch to port;
Tired of his exile on the wide water,
Sighing and breathing into the salt air,
Build his single home slowly around him,
Wrap and coil the spine upward and over,
Mottle the roof and floor like a snakeskin,
Plate on the nacred threads of the rainbow,
Web it or fret it or lace it with lime,
With colors from the rare source of his being,
An egg free-floating across the water.
What's left is the white, prismatical play
Of light changing over a grayish mass,
One empty cockle clinging to another,
A tuft of sea fur on a horny point,
Stuck-up and preening like a tattered flag.

—SARAH ARVIO

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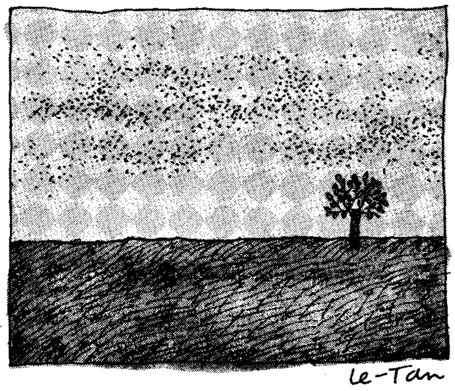


I'M shocked at how cute the clinic doctor is; he has brooding, vampire eyes and a strong smell of foreign after-shave. I'm glad I didn't go to the person Stash suggested. Even so, I'm nervous—I'm used to my family doctor, Dr. Henness, who is at least eighty years old. When I was eighteen and went for my college examination, he begged me not to get undressed. He never really seemed to remember my name, but he represented stability and some sort of security. With him, I

knew there would never be anything wrong with me. But with this guy—Dr. Bartholdi—things are ominous right from the start. He sulks at his desk, jabbing something that lurks in the top drawer.

I assure him right off the bat that I'm not pregnant. I describe what's been happening to me. I want to prove to him that I'm not flaky; because of this, perhaps, my hands are rummaging wildly through my hair and I'm talking a mile a minute. I explain that I never take drugs, owing to the fact that they don't make me feel good. Nor was I drunk on the recent occasions when I practically fainted.

But Dr. Bartholdi pays me no mind. He merely examines his fingernails while I talk. Then he makes me pull up my shirt. He presses his cold stethoscope against me. It's difficult, with such a handsome doctor, not to feel violated. I imagine marrying him, dutifully undergoing such examination nightly. Then I tell myself he's a medical person, not a human being.

I'm lying flat on my back on scratchy paper, waiting for the verdict, when Dr. Bartholdi tells me I can sit up and tuck my shirt in. He writes furiously on a pad—probably dialogue for some autobiographical best-seller he's working on: "Chapter 23: The Case of Eleanor T."

"Your blood pressure is low," he says. "Probably if you get up too quickly after you have a few drinks, you'll feel dizzy."

"I didn't have a few drinks," I say. "I didn't feel dizzy. I almost passed out on the street. If I hadn't lain down, I would have blacked out completely."

"You wouldn't believe how many people I treat in night clubs. People faint all the time. Vasovagal syncope."

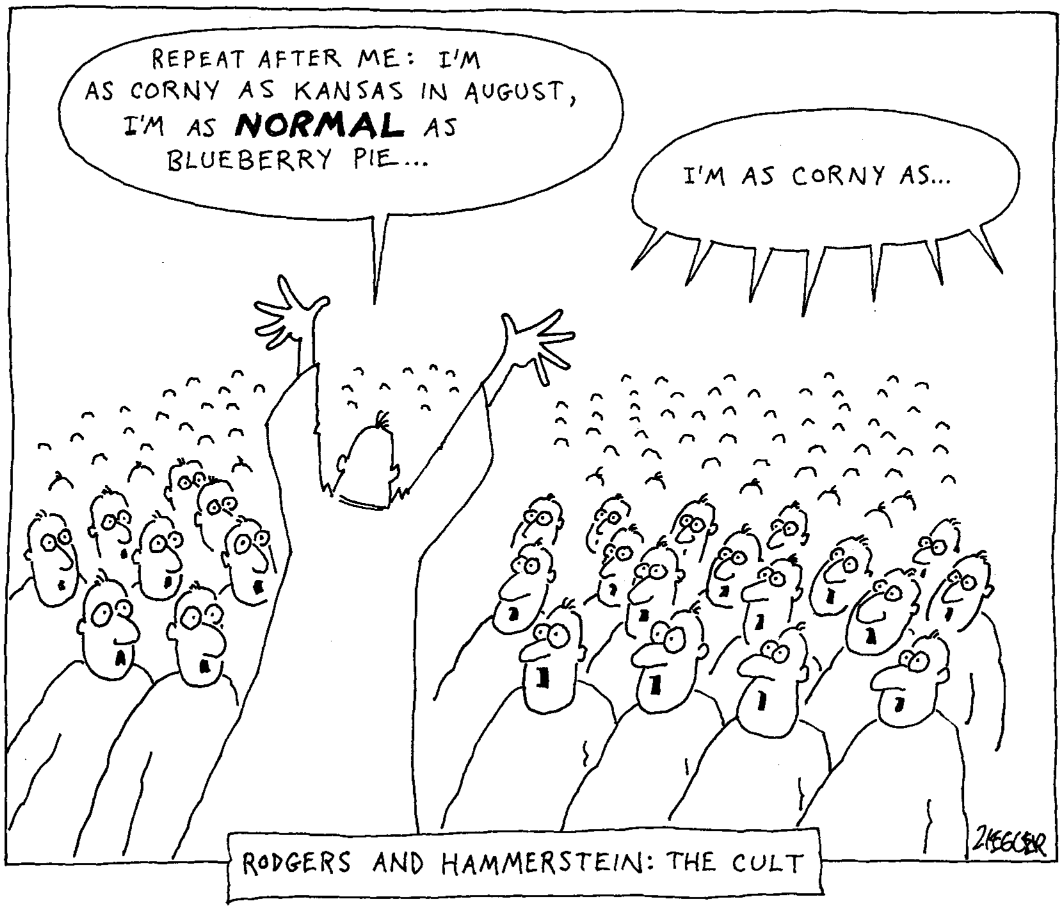
"Yeah?" I say. I wonder why Dr. Bartholdi would even bother to go to night clubs if he has to spend his whole evening treating hysterical fainters.

He sends me for a blood test, saying, "You can call me on Thursday for the results, but I don't think they'll tell us anything we don't know."

It gives me a certain satisfaction to get jabbed in the finger. I watch as one large, ruby dot of blood appears on my skin, miraculous as jewelry. I think of the dot of blood as full of life and motion and drama, like the lives of the people around me. Microbes, corpuscles—who knows what deathly battles are being fought all the time between white blood cells and alien invaders?

On the other hand, on the subway ride home, I do wish I had something more definite to tell Stash: that I have anemia, pleurisy, an electrolyte imbalance. I'd like to inform him that shortly I'll be reduced to life in a wheelchair, that I'm counting on him to push me across the street. I'm disappointed that Dr. Bartholdi dismissed me so abruptly, without even trying to get my phone number. I could have given him Daria's; that might have taken care of her for a while.

STASH isn't home, and, after hours of waiting, at eight o'clock I fix myself some hamburger and blue cheese on an English muffin. I like ketchup. It's a good thing Stash isn't home, because I gleefully finish off a bottle. This would certainly drive him crazy. I take my plate to the bed, at the far


REPEAT AFTER ME: I'M AS CORNY AS KANSAS IN AUGUST, I'M AS NORMAL AS BLUEBERRY PIE...
I'M AS CORNY AS...
ZIEGLER

RODGERS AND HAMMERSTEIN: THE CULT

end of the room, so that during my meal I can watch TV; there's a program on about how rich people make more money. This pastime takes up an entire life.

I'm annoyed at Stash, but by the eleven-o'clock news, with more on the water shortage and a story about a sculptor who was murdered by junkies, I start to get worried. Andrew, our dog, waits patiently for him by the door; he's not even interested when I offer him a bit of hamburger.

I don't really want anything to happen to Stash, although I enjoy planning his funeral from time to time. A lot of things can occur in the city—muggings, shootings, women accosting him from the windows of limousines.

At twelve-thirty, Stash walks in.

"Where were you?" I say. "What's happened? Why didn't you call?" These are the very words I've resolved not to say.

"Daria," Stash says. "Her dog died."

"She has her own boyfriend!" I say.

"I had to go with her in the dog ambulance to the hospital," Stash says. "She was hysterical."

"The dog was twelve years old!" I shout, jumping up to empty ashtrays. "What was she hysterical about? Why didn't you call me?"

"She let the dog off the leash," Stash says. "It was her fault. Textron got attacked by an Akita. Straight to the jugular."

"We have a dog *here*," I say. "Tell me you're having an affair."

"There's nothing between Daria and me," Stash says. "We've been friends for years and years. We used to hang out together."

"I paid for half of that Godzilla lighter for her birthday," I say. "She never even thanked me. What about me? I had to spend the day at the doctor's."

"What happened?" Stash says wearily. He opens the refrigerator and moves a jar of Mexican hot sauce to one side.

I imagine the hands on my wristwatch stopping, then turning backward. I see myself dressed in black, my face very white, a red rose clutched in one frozen hand. I change the red rose to a lavender one. "It was weird," I say. "He spent hours examining my breasts."

"What?" Stash says. "Report him! What do your breasts have to do with fainting?" I've gotten to him. He's indignant, and furiously snatches a hunk of cheese from some hidden recess inside the fridge. I watch him sink his teeth into it; I want to tell him to use a knife, but I don't say it.

"He had to listen to my heart," I answer at last.

Stash poises over the cheese like a puma made nervous at a fresh kill. "So what did he say was wrong?" he says.

"Vasovagal syncope."

"Which means?"

"I faint in night clubs," I say. "Or if I stand up too quickly. It's a common problem. Maybe he said something about a vagalvaso system."

Stash shakes his head. "Why do you go to that crummy clinic? They don't know anything there."

"I'm a member," I say. "He was a doctor, with a medical degree from an accredited university."

"He said there was nothing wrong with you? But I saw you! Why didn't you go to my doctor, like I told you?"

"She should have put that dog to sleep long ago," I say. "It's cruel to keep a suffering animal alive."

Stash comes over to the bed. "There's nothing between us, Eleanor, really," he says. He sits down and puts his arm around my shoulders. "Don't be jealous. She loved that dog. Now she's all alone. But we have each other." He strokes my hair, and with his free hand he takes a Tuscano cigar from his pocket. "Who's on Johnny Carson tonight?" he says. "Anybody good?"

I move to the edge of the bed, bend over, put my head between my knees. My hair touches the floor. In my veins—some thin and twisty, others fat, ropy—I can feel my blood, thrown for a loop, struggling to flow uphill where only a second before it was flowing down.

—TAMA JANOWITZ

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SUPPORTERS OF TEXTILE BILL
WIN BATTLE, BUT VETO LOOMS
—*Raleigh* (*N.C.*) *News & Observer.*

No jokes, please.

PERSONAL HISTORY

SOUND-SHADOWS—II

Liberty and Gentlemen's Choice

> MEHTA SUCCEEDS
> ELAM AS PRESIDENT
>
> In a close race Ved Mehta won the hotly contested race for Student Senate president over his lone opponent, Oather Brown. In accordance with the Senate Constitution, Oather Brown automatically becomes vice-president. . . .
>
> The Student Senate was started only this year and has, from all respects, been highly successful.—*Little Rock (Ark.) Arkansas Braille News, May, 1951.*

IT was the end of the school year 1950-51. On the stage, at the lectern, was Mr. J. M. Woolly, the superintendent of our school, the Arkansas School for the Blind. Seated on Mr. Woolly's right, at a long table, were the three outgoing senators, including Jackie Elam, the president of the Student Senate, a popular boy I didn't know very well; standing on Mr. Woolly's left were the nine of us, the first senators to be elected for a full-year term. Seated below in the school auditorium were the entire student body and the faculty of the school—about a hundred and twenty-five people.

Mr. Woolly went along the table lighting candles set in front of the outgoing senators and so beginning the installation ceremony. What strides our student government has made in the few months of its existence, I thought as the candles sizzled and sputtered. This ceremony is worthy of the Senate in Washington. I was about to be installed as president of the Student Senate, and I couldn't have been more excited if I'd been about to become President of the United States.

"Don't you forget you were born in India, Whip, and people who aren't born in this country can't become President of the United States," Oather, my vice-president, whispered, as if he'd been reading my thoughts. (Whip was one of the school nicknames for me.) He laughed under his breath; I tried to keep a straight face.

"The outgoing senate has done a fine job," Mr. Woolly said, returning to the lectern. "Your senators have assisted us in preparing the *Arkansas Braille News*. Your senate has set up a social committee for each of the six upper grades, to plan your parties and activities. It has also set up a student suggestion box."

Clapping filled the air.

As had been arranged, Mr. John Ed Chiles, the senate's faculty sponsor, and perhaps the most accomplished blind teacher, walked up onto the stage and went to the piano. While he played "My Country, 'Tis of Thee" at a stately pace, Jackie Elam got up from his seat with his lighted candle in his hand, walked over to a stand near us, set down the candle, its holder making a little *clack*, and walked off the stage. One by one, the outgoing senators followed him, leaving their candles on the stand, while Mr. Chiles played the melody through for the second time. The Sons of Liberty are relinquishing their torch to the next generation, I thought portentously. Six of us were succeeding ourselves, so Mr. Woolly hastily put some extra lighted candles on the stand.

Mr. Chiles started the melody for the third time—Mr. Woolly's cue to swear me in. He called me to the stand and handed me a candle. The flame burned in front of my face, warming me all over.

"Repeat after me," Mr. Woolly said. "I, Ved Mehta—"

"I, Ved Mehta—"

"—solemnly pledge myself to fulfill to the best of my ability—"

"—solemnly pledge myself to fulfill to the best of my ability—"

"—the duties and obligations—"

"—the duties and obligations—"

"—entrusted to me as president of the Student Senate of the Arkansas School for the Blind."

"—entrusted to me as president of the Student Senate of the Arkansas School for the Blind."

"I will at all times strive to uphold and honor the Senate Constitution—"

"I will at all times strive to uphold and honor the Senate Constitution—"

"—and to further the interests of this school."

"—and to further the interests of this school."

I thanked Mr. Woolly, and then he stepped down and joined the audience while I walked a couple of steps to the chair where Jackie Elam had sat, put

"Well, they started exchanging wisecracks, then good-natured barbs, then openly hostile barbs, and then blows."

my candle on the long table in front of that chair, and returned to the lectern to administer the oath of office to Oather, Kenneth Bruton, George McNabb, James Spakes, and the other newly elected senators. After they had all been sworn in and had taken their places at the long table, with candles glowing down its length, I made a short speech about our hopes for the future. I closed the installation ceremony by asking everyone to join in singing the national anthem.

THE idea of setting up a student government went back to the beginning of that school year, when we students were having a lot of trouble with the school's new teachers; we felt they were behaving capriciously—for instance, giving us bad character marks for no reason at all. One day, Arlie Treadway, Oather, Bruton, and I had the idea of drafting a constitution for the junior-senior high school; we had all studied civics with Mr. Chiles and had been influenced by what we learned from him about democracy. But when we tried out the idea on the other boys in the sleeping hall that night they roundly attacked it.

"I ain't had your civics yet, so I don't know about constitutions," Charlie Wren said. He was seventeen and in the eighth grade. "But I bet Mr. Woolly will just tell y'all to go jump."

"That he will," McNabb said. He was twenty-two and in the eleventh grade. "This is a state school, and Mr. Woolly has to answer to the governor and the legislature. He'd have to be crazy to take the power away from the teachers and give it to the students."

"We'll fight Mr. Woolly and win, because we are the Sons of Liberty," Bruton said. He was McNabb's best friend and, at eighteen, was also in the eleventh grade.

"You crazy boys ain't got even the bows and arrows of the Red Indians," Charlie said. He was half-sighted, and his remark was as deflating as if he had inspected the clothes of us totally blind boys before a dance with his one good eye and announced, "Crazy boys in Booneville wouldn't be caught dead in *those* colors."

The next day, Treadway, Oather, Bruton, and I cornered Mr. Chiles and told him about the students' discontent with some of the new teachers and about our idea for a student government.

"I don't want to pass judgment on my colleagues," Mr. Chiles said. "But it's a sorry state of affairs when students and teachers draw battle lines. We live and work in the small community of the school, and we should live like a family." He added thoughtfully, "It might be a fine idea, though, for the junior-senior high school to have a student government under a constitution. Your government couldn't change who your teachers are—that's Mr. Woolly's domain—but it could give you a voice in the running of the school. Still, your government could work only if it had full faculty support and participation. What I'm saying is that if you drafted a constitution on these lines you could go to Mr. Woolly with it and present it not as a manifesto of your rights but as something designed to teach you—and your teachers—about government and civic responsibility. I'll be glad to

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go to Mr. Woolly on your behalf and ask his permission to work with you on drafting that kind of constitution."

We immediately agreed to Mr. Chiles's plan, and after he had got Mr. Woolly's permission we set about framing a constitution, imagining that Mr. Chiles was George Washington and we were Madison, Franklin, Hamilton, and Gouverneur Morris. It took a couple of months of steady work—mostly by Treadway, Oather, Mr. Chiles, and Miss Mary Harper, who taught English, and who was called in because we needed a sighted reader—to prepare the final draft. The preamble stated that the purpose of the constitution was "to establish better understanding between students and faculty and to develop a sense of responsibility and leadership among the students." Article I set up the Student Senate. A section of Article II provided for the election of senators and apportioned the seats in such a manner that the eleventh- and twelfth-grade senators constituted a majority. Other sections and articles provided for the election of senate officers, the procedure for impeachment and removal of senators and senate officers, the procedure for amending the constitution. Finally, the bylaws called for weekly meetings of the senate and set forth its order of business. The whole constitution, however, was at the sufferance of Mr. Woolly: he had the power to veto any and all senate actions.

The constitution was presented to the school by Mr. Woolly at a weekly assembly in January and was immediately adopted by voice vote. The first senate could sit for only a few months, since the seniors would be graduating in May, so elections for senators and senate officers were held quickly.

The first meeting of the senate was held in February, in Mr. Chiles's classroom. Jackie Elam, who had been elected president, took Mr. Chiles's chair on the platform, while the rest of us who had been elected senators sat at desks, as did Mr. Chiles.

"As your president, I call the meeting to order," Jackie Elam said. He fell silent and shifted in his chair.

"Well," Mr. Chiles said, "I think that your first order of business should be to decide on rules of procedure. You could adopt Robert's Rules." He outlined them for us as if this were his class.

We all said, "Yes, yes," and the rules were deemed adopted.

"Mr. President, I make a motion—" Bruton began.

"Kenneth, you don't make a motion," Mr. Chiles said. "You say, 'I move that . . .' "

"I move that Senator Mehta be elected as secretary-treasurer," Bruton resumed. "The constitution says that we have to elect a senator for this office."

"I second the motion," Jackie Elam said. Mr. Chiles informed him that, as president, he had to stay neutral, except in the case of a tie vote.

"*I* second the nomination, then," Oather said.

Mr. Chiles told us that now anyone who liked could speak to the motion.

Bruton made a speech about how he

"Something goes around something, but that's as far as I've got."

• •

"Steve is a very lucky guy. He just married into a fantastic condominium on the East Side."

• •

thought I was good at handling money.

"Where would our funds come from?" Oather asked Mr. Chiles.

"Mr. Woolly will give us some funds for organizing parties and other school activities," Mr. Chiles said. "The faculty has also decided that vending-stand funds should be handled by the senate. But, as in recent years, those funds will have to be earmarked for silver class rings for seniors, the printing of graduation invitations, the senior banquet, and the senior formal dance."

"Since Mr. Woolly wants to publish our minutes in the *Arkansas Braille News*, we should have someone as secretary-treasurer who can write," McNabb said, speaking to the motion. "Anyone who's heard Whip typing knows that he can write—and, man, write fast!"

A voice vote was taken, and I was elected. I was as apprehensive as I was excited, but I immediately started taking minutes. Though I'd developed a private Braille shorthand, people talked much faster than I could write. After a while, I realized I was only putting down names and a few key words for the writing of a draft later on.

Bruton and I, along with one nonsenator, Joyce Boyle—she was a new student, fifteen, and in tenth grade, with me—were elected to the editorial board of the *Arkansas Braille News*, which was published by the school three times a year in regular print and went to families of students and to friends and patrons of the school. From now on, the board members were to appoint student reporters, assign them various school beats, and receive their Braille or typed copy. Since we couldn't proofread the typed copy or the print version of the *News*, Mr. Chiles told us that Miss Harper had agreed to serve as our faculty adviser and help us with all the non-Braille tasks.

"I think that you should consider devising an installation ceremony for the president and all the senators who'll be elected in the spring," Mr. Chiles said near the close of the meeting. "Your ceremony should have a lot of pomp and circumstance, so that your senate will be invested with significance."

It hadn't occurred to us that we should have some kind of ceremony, but we put the item on the agenda for the next meeting.

IT was April, and spring was in the air. Everywhere there was the fragrance of new grass and blossoming flowers. Except in Mr. Chiles's tenth-grade world-history class, little work was getting done. We whiled away the school hours teasing our women teachers, playing cards using French numbers and French suit names, so that Mr. Woolly would think we were practicing French, and, above all, talking school politics.

The election of the first full-term senate was a few days away. Oather and I were running neck and neck for president. Because school politics was relatively new to both students and teachers, we all seemed to be in a fever over the election. Wherever I went—to the locker room or the lounge, the sleeping hall or the vending stand—it seemed that students were discussing Oather and me. Blind people hate to be overheard, so I always made a point of clearing my throat when I entered a room. Once, I wasn't fast enough.

"Aw, don't you know that Barbara

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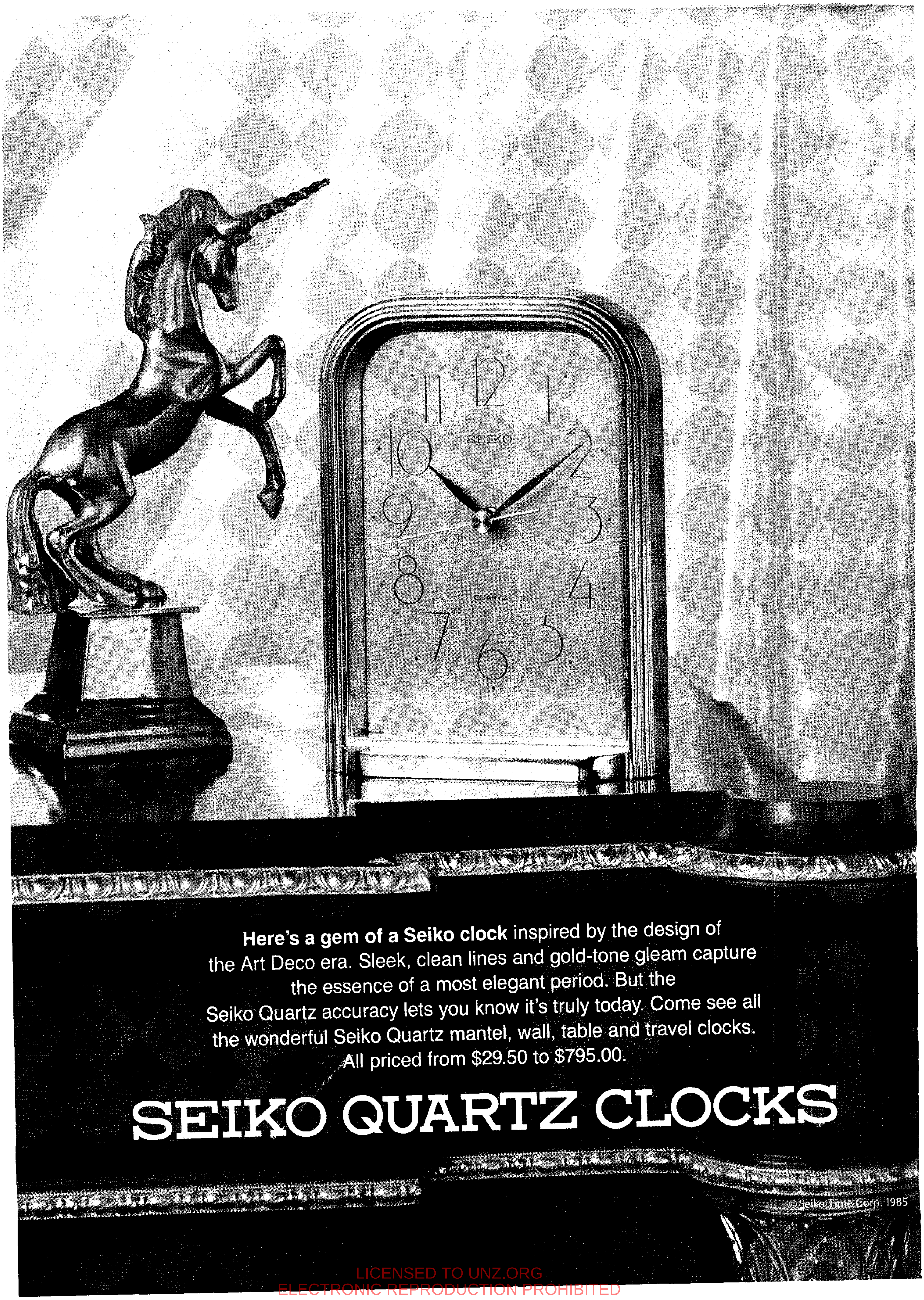

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is old enough to be Ved's mother?" Billy Tabor was saying to Joe Wright as I walked into the lounge. "The only reason he's going with her is so he can get all the girls' votes." Barbara Worthen (that's not her real name) had come to the school in the middle of the year. She was very studious and she could see better than almost any other girl in the school. She had been placed in the tenth grade with me, and I had just assumed that she was more or less the same age as the rest of us. I had had a date with her—the first date of my life—a few weeks earlier, and a couple of dates with her since, and they had had nothing at all to do with my running for office.

I wanted to shout at Billy that he was lying, but, thinking that any show of anger would be bad politics, I held my tongue and walked rapidly through the lounge.

"Boy, I don't know what to do—Oather and Ved are both nice guys," I heard Joe say as I went out.

The next morning, while Bruton, my campaign manager, and I were taking our showers, I told him what Billy Tabor had said. I counted on the noise of the water to keep boys who might come into the bathroom from overhearing our talk.

"I've heard Charlie Wren say that Barbara really looks old," Bruton said, "and boys have asked me why a popular guy like you should suddenly start dating someone like her. I didn't bother about it much, but now I'm wondering if it might turn out to be the sleeper issue of the campaign. Do you know how old she *is*?"

"Not you, too, Bruton!" I exclaimed.

"But I'm running your campaign. I have to know."

"I don't have the slightest idea." There are so many things a blind person can tell from a voice, I thought. I can often tell the height, the weight, and sometimes the age of the person. I can usually tell how attractive the person is. But there are always occasions when the voice is misleading. Barbara may be like one of those older actresses on the radio who sound young.

"It looks like the question of Barbara's age has gotten mixed up with your motives," Bruton was saying. "Did you or didn't you start going out with her to get the girls' vote? Everyone knows that the girls like Barbara because she can see, and help them with their clothes."

"I started dating her before the idea of my running came up. Why is everyone thinking such nasty thoughts?"

"Why don't you just ask her how old she is? It may turn out she's your age. Then I can contradict the charges. But if she's really old, then no one's going to believe it's just that you suddenly found her attractive. They're going to say you had ulterior motives."

"But—"

"No buts," Bruton broke in, turning off his shower. He added, "You shouldn't have gone into politics if you didn't want your toes stepped on."

"YOU all jump up and you all come down. Swing your partner right around," Miss Harper called over the public-address system that evening at our square-dance club, in the gymnasium. The fiddle music on my tape recorder speeded up. (I provided the music for the square dances.) I swung Barbara, my partner, around.

All about us there was a continuous shuffle of feet, punctuated by the shouts of some clumsy students who had missed connecting with their partners.

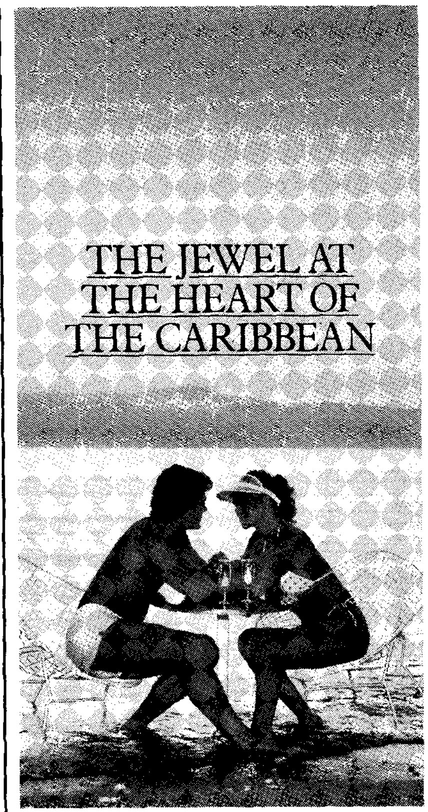
"Is this too fast?" Miss Harper asked, without interrupting the rhythm of the call.

"No, we can go faster!" many of us cried from the floor.

Miss Harper quickened her call until her words were hardly distinguishable, but most of us knew the dance so well that we had no trouble following it. We moved faster and faster, until the floor under our feet seemed to be spinning like a turntable. Why is it, I wondered as we whirled, that so many of us master square dancing so much more easily than we do ballroom dancing. Is it easier to lose ourselves in a set pattern of group activity than to strike out on our own, like a sighted person, and lead a partner on the dance floor? Is there something in the condition of being blind that militates against bold initiatives and assertive action? I wished that the square dance would never stop—that I would never have to ask Barbara her age.

"What next, boys and girls?" Miss Harper asked, barely breaking the flow of her call. Maybe we never will stop, I thought.

"Texas Star!" people cried. We switched to that dance so smoothly that I imagined someone watching us might have thought we were professionals. For a moment, I had Bar-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bara's hand in mine. She flew past like a scared bird.

There was a muffled sound, like gloved hands clapping. Miss Harper's calling stopped, and we froze in the middle of a step, a foot and an arm raised. It was as though a drive belt turning the gymnasium floor had snapped.

"Lois, are you all right? Kenneth, are you all right?" Miss Harper asked, rushing over to Lois Woodward and Bruton. They had collided head on. Maybe we are not good at anything, I thought—neither ballroom dancing nor square dancing. Maybe we are just deficient.

"Let's have a break," Miss Harper said.

"I'm so dizzy," Barbara said, coming over to me.

Everyone started toward the only water fountain, near the punching bag. Barbara and I went along. "How old are you?" I asked abruptly. I had her hand in mine, but she pulled it away as if I had given her an electric shock.

"Why?" she asked.

"I have to know."

"You see, for a long time I didn't go to school—" she began evasively.

"How old? I really must know," I insisted.

"Twenty-seven," she said, with great effort.

She's ten whole years older than I am, I thought. They're right—she's almost old enough to be my mother. It's terrible.

"No one knows," she continued. "I've kept it to myself." (She never did tell me why she hadn't gone to school.)

We were right next to the punching bag. I wanted to hit it.

"I knew I was ten years older than you," Barbara was saying, in a shy, dying voice. "But you looked so lonely sometimes."

I pressed her hand. She is really nice, I thought, and, after all, the authorities almost actively discourage any long-lasting relationship between boys and girls at the school. They're always hinting that the real function of social-adjustment activities is to enable us to find a sighted partner out in the world. So, in a sense, whether Barbara is seventeen or twenty-seven makes little difference. We are just birds who are temporarily taking shelter here together and in the end are destined to fly our separate ways.

"How old you are doesn't matter to me," I said. "The issue just came up in the campaign. But I won't say anything about it, and you shouldn't feel you have to, either."

"Whip, did you ask Barbara how old she is?" Bruton demanded when I got back to the dormitory.

"No, Bruton," I said. "And I'm not going to. We'll have to fight this election without knowing that."

I'D had my first encounter with Barbara on the first day of that school year. We were in Mr. Chiles's world-history class, and he introduced Barbara as a new student. I liked her voice, and liked the thought of a brand-new girl with no school past, no ties to any boy.

Mr. Chiles then handed each of us a new Braille textbook.

"I already have the book, in 'sight-saving' print," Barbara said, in a tentative voice, to Mr. Chiles.

Mr. Chiles asked Barbara how good her eyesight was. One of the first things that blind students and teachers want to know about any new student is whether he or she has some sight, I thought. Anyone who has even a little sight automatically has a certain standing.

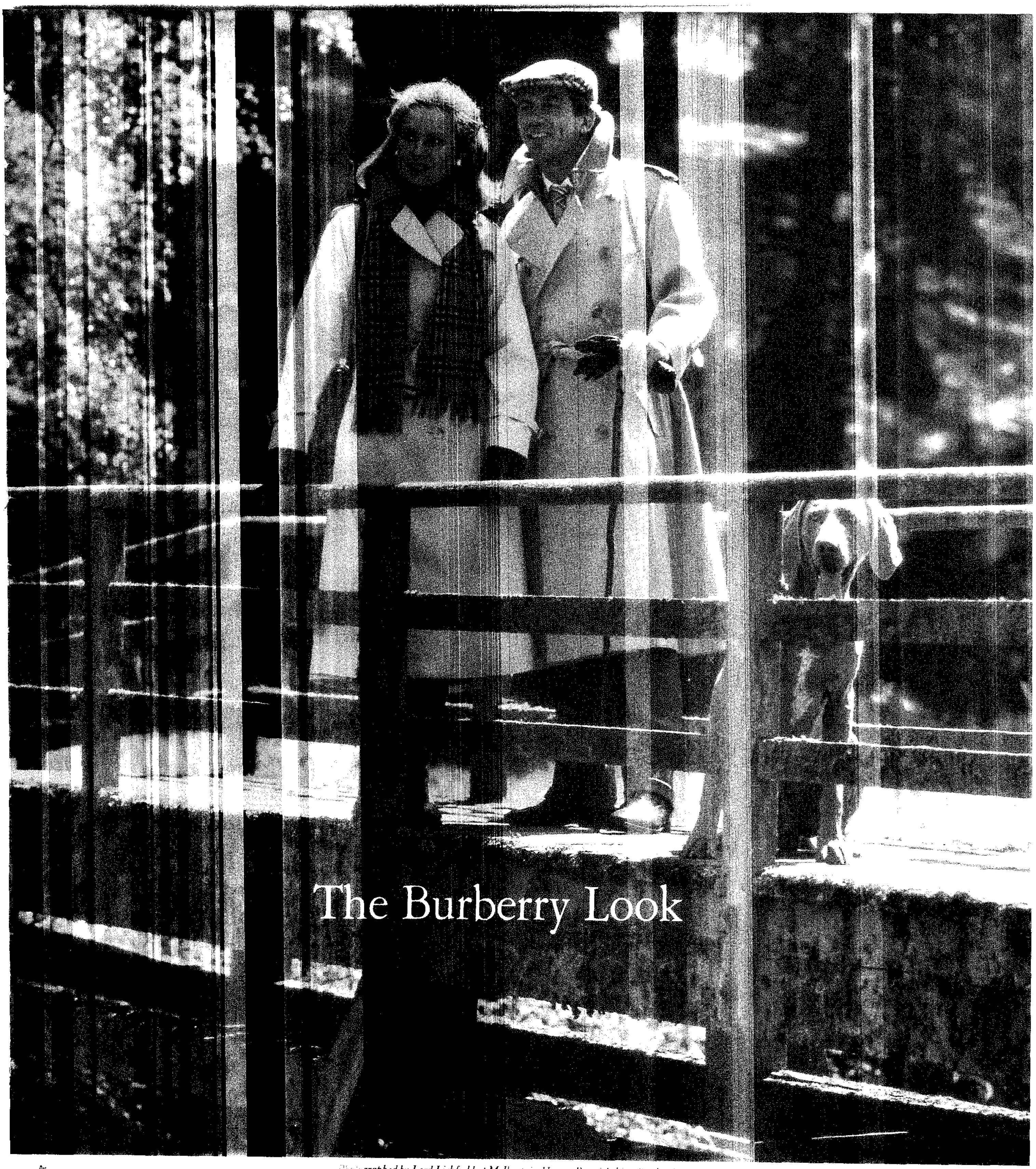
"I can read print," she said.

The revelation made her seem exciting to me. She is only legally blind, I thought. She's almost as good as a sighted person.

I had never had a date, and I immediately thought of asking Barbara to a Saturday-night dance, but I imagined, as I had so often with other girls, that I didn't have a chance. I just assumed that Jackie Elam, Bruton, or some other really popular boy would soon ask her for a date and that she would become his steady. But weeks and months went by and no one asked her for a date. "She's just too doggone shy," Bruton confided to me. "She hardly ever opens her mouth."

It was true. In classes, she rarely spoke up, and Saturday after Saturday, whenever she was my dance partner—most of our dances were gentlemen's choice—I had trouble getting two words out of her. Boys said that she was just boring, but I thought that she was simply reserved—too good to indulge in gossip and small talk.

During that school year, my role in drafting the constitution, my election as senator and then as secretary-treasurer, and my position on the editorial board of the *News* gave me a certain self-confidence. One afternoon in spring, I happened to be alone with



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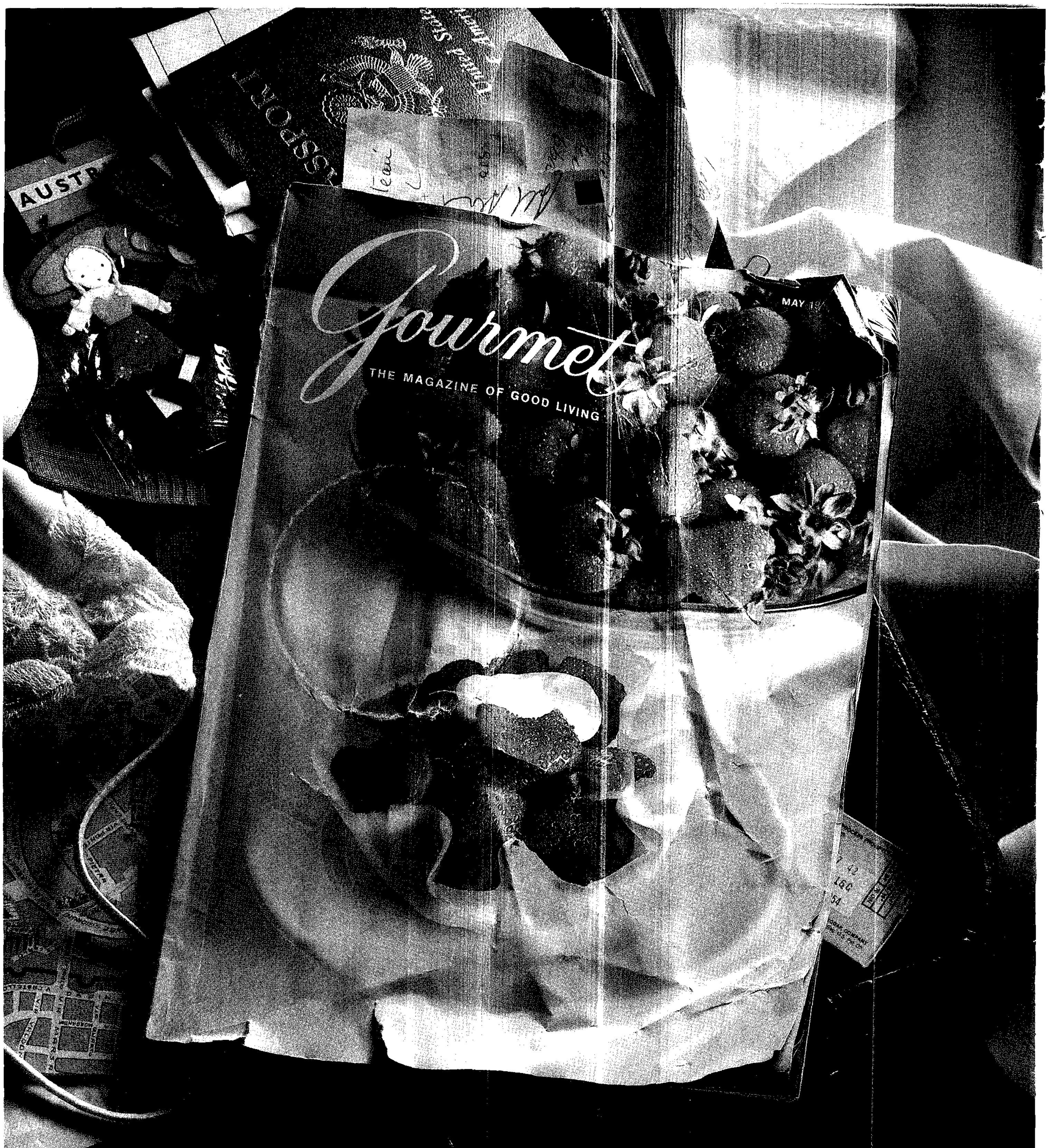
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Barbara in the English classroom before the bell. I had just come from a senate meeting, and I recalled that she had run for the senate and lost. I felt sorry for her. I found myself saying, "Barbara . . . Barbara, will you come to the Saturday-night dance with me?" I felt breathless, as if I had run a mile. In asking Barbara for a date, I am going against my Indian moral training, I thought. I am giving in to temporary pleasure. I am seeking the company of a lady who is not a relative. I am pretending that my interest in her is something other than infatuation and animal lust. It's not so long ago that I was criticizing Cousin Yog for having dates. I am a hypocrite.

"I'd be glad to," Barbara said. I could feel my ears burning. She added —uncharacteristically, I thought— "I've been waiting for months for you to ask me."

Her acceptance made me feel let down, somewhat depressed. Perhaps because I didn't really respect myself, I imagined that now that Barbara had accepted me *she* wasn't worthy of respect. The boys are right, I thought— she's boring, and I should never have asked her for a date. If I had to ask someone, I should have tried for a girl more appealing and popular with the boys. (Quite aside from my moral qualms, as I realized much later, it was as if I had got so used to rejection that I didn't value acceptance when it came —as if I had come to feel that the only things worth having were things I couldn't have, like sight, and the things I could have were not worth having.)

All the same, when Saturday arrived I eagerly got dressed up for the dance and then walked over to the girls' side of the building with Oather, Bruton, and Jackie Elam, feeling—for the first time, it seemed—like a one-hundred-per-cent American and a one-hundred-per-cent-socially-adjusted blind person.

I even enjoyed waiting for Barbara. I am gaining self-confidence in so many areas of life, I thought. I am acting like someone in command of himself. The boys are right when they say that that's the key to getting dates —to being successful with girls.

It was a marvellous sensation to be stepping along the hundred or so yards to the gymnasium with Barbara, unchaperoned. Her hand, soft but firm, felt wonderful. I had held girls' hands before at the school, when we were dancing, but never while walking on the lively grass, under the still sky. And she was an American, and my date. Having a date is like being free, I thought. It's being self-reliant and democratic, using one's own judgment rather than leaning on that of a parent, as one does at home, waiting for a marriage to be arranged.

In the gymnasium, however, dancing with Barbara, to the record "Mona Lisa," her hand lightly resting on my shoulder and a bracelet she was wearing tinkling in my ear, I had a new attack of an unpleasant old thought: Would I be better off with a more desirable date than Barbara? Then it occurred to me that everyone now and again thought the grass was greener on the other side, but that our grass was without color. At that moment, more than ever, I wanted to see grass—also to see Barbara's face. Our ability to choose and be happy with our choice, it seemed, was damaged with our eyes. I no longer trusted the pleasure I took in Barbara's hand on my shoulder and the tinkling of her bracelet in my ear. The whole dance floor seemed to move to the rhythm of discontent.

Yet as the evening went on I came to feel that having any girl for a date had many pluses. Now I didn't have to stand by the wall listening to the couples out on the floor and making excuses to myself for not tapping a boy on the shoulder and cutting in—taking his partner's hand and waist, as we had been told to do in our social-adjustment classes. Now I didn't have to end up dancing with teachers, or sitting out dances, huddling with other boys who didn't have dates, feeling like a second-class citizen, jealous of boys who were dancing. It was so comforting to have my own date to stand with and to look after—to get punch and cookies for during the break.

As I was saying good night to Barbara on the girls' side, I found myself asking her—my heart beating wildly— "Can I have another date? We could go together to the school picnic at Boyle Park next Saturday."

"Yes," she said.

I stood there awkwardly, facing her, not knowing what I should do, what was expected of me. "Good night," I said, and, with my hands in my pockets, did an abrupt turn and walked rapidly to the boys' side, as if I could see the way.

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we had spent our second date at the picnic, walking, talking, and eating. At school, there was always a girls' side and a boys' side—in the dining room, in the auditorium, even in the gymnasium during wrestling meets—but for some reason the school authorities allowed students to sit with their dates on outings, and here I was, sitting next to a girl at a concert. I felt happy and shy, and had difficulty concentrating on the music, because I was thinking of Barbara breathing next to me, with only an armrest between us.

The orchestra finished playing a familiar piece of rousing music, and there was an intermission. I longed to know what the piece of music was. I also wanted to know the seating arrangement of the orchestra; I hadn't even been able to tell which side the strings were on, or the horns, because the sound had been all mixed together and I hadn't been completely alert. Barbara had the program in her hands and she was fidgeting with it, making the paper crackle. I can easily ask her, I thought. But that will be admitting to her what I feel—that I am less than she is, because she can read the program, can see the stage and the seated musicians.

All around us, the boys and girls from the school seemed to be talking animatedly. I must think of something to say, I thought. It looks very odd for Barbara and me to be sitting like two silent telephones in the middle of a public place.

Abruptly, Barbara said, her voice exploding like a little firecracker, "I love you."

I felt frightened—more frightened than ever before in my life, I believe. If someone had thrown a net over me, as we used to do to catch butterflies, or had put a pillow over my face and sat on it, as Cousin Rajinder had once done, I couldn't have felt more trapped. I wanted to run out of the auditorium and go back to the boys' dormitory—to the familiar, ordered world of the lounge, the locker room, and the sleeping hall.

"No, you don't," I snapped. I knew my voice sounded harsh and belligerent, but I felt I had to fight her off.

"I do," she said. In contrast to my voice, hers sounded weak and faint.

"No, you don't."

She was silent—so silent that the people in the auditorium suddenly sounded very loud. I've crushed her, I thought. I'm a brute.

"You don't know my family," I said, as gently as I could. "You don't know Punjabi." I tried to explain to her that she couldn't love me, because she couldn't possibly know me, all the while thinking that *I* couldn't possibly love anyone who didn't have my parents' approval, who didn't fit into our family system, who wasn't an Indian, who wasn't Punjabi, who wasn't of our caste and class.

She didn't respond. I thought of reaching over and taking her hand but decided that that would be encouraging her. I held myself in and said sententiously, "Love grows like a tree—it takes years."

"I love you. I'll always love you," she said again, quietly but with determination.

I am on dangerous ground, I thought. I may slip. Besides, the boys might overhear us and make fun of me. But they all seemed to be preoccupied with their own conversations. I was trying to think what to say or do next when there was a hush, people applauded, and the orchestra resumed playing.

The rest of the concert and the bus ride back to the school are hazy in my memory. I think Barbara and I were mostly awkward with each other.

It was a couple of days after the concert that I overheard Billy Tabor's remark that I was dating Barbara only to get the girls' vote.

IT was election day. The sleeping hall was nearly empty, but I wanted to go on sleeping. The night before, I had stayed up late reading, in the broom closet, just outside the sleeping hall, that Mr. Woolly had given me so I could have a corner of my own. Anyway, I didn't want to wake up to election day.

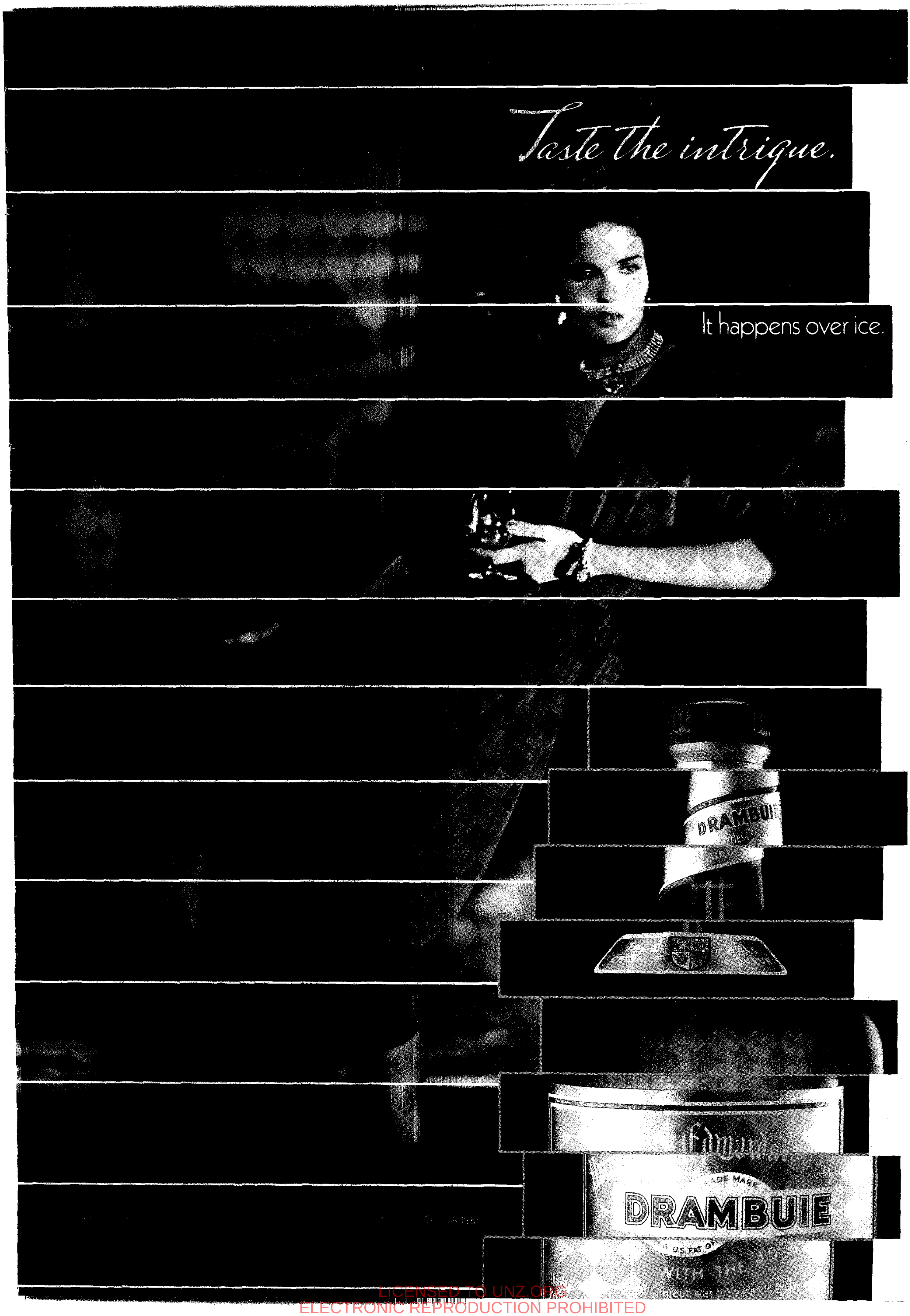
"You have the election in the bag," Bruton was saying from somewhere above me. "You heard the steampipes this morning, didn't you?"

"No. Why?" I said, sitting up.

"Oather and a couple of the boys went down to the lounge at the crack of dawn and started banging on the steampipes," McNabb said, coming over. "The noise woke up practically everyone in the hall."

"I thought you were woken up, too, Whip, but, as a good politician, were just pretending to be asleep," Bruton said.

"But you must have heard Jackie say from his bed that you'd be a better president, that you wouldn't do something as irresponsible as wake everyone up just for fun," McNabb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said. "I'm sure that every boy who was woken up by the steampipes is going to vote for you now."

"Besides, everybody knows that Oather is a country boy and doesn't have your style," Bruton said.

"I don't give a damn," I said petulantly—I was still half asleep. "I hate politics—steampipes and all."

"This is America. And what is democracy without politics?" Bruton asked rhetorically.

"Politics is a dirty, disgusting business," I said.

"When the election's in the bag, every politician says that," McNabb said. "It's called eating your cake and having it, too."

I was furious. It wasn't the election results I was thinking of so much as Barbara's reputation.

That evening, Mr. Chiles came to the lounge. "I've counted the ballots," he announced. The ballots were in Braille. "Ved is the new president of the senate. I'm off to tell Miss Harper, so that she can announce the result in the girls' dormitory."

The few boys in the lounge clapped, but Joe Wright, who, as usual, was listening to the baseball game, asked, "What he say?" Joe, who was a year older than I was but in the sixth grade, seemed, somehow, never to be there. Without waiting for an answer to his question, he started cheering a hit.

I felt oddly sad. I thought that I had probably won because of the steampipes. I also thought that Oather was a much more deserving candidate than I was. My education had been sketchy, while he had been at the school since the school building was completed—in 1939, when he was eight. He had always been first in his class, and probably had the best record in the junior-senior high school. He was one of the most sociable, friendly, and good-hearted of the boys. There was another element in my reaction, which took me years, even decades, to grasp. I had worked flat out to be elected president, but now that I was president I felt that my success was not worth having, precisely because it was *I* who had succeeded.

Someone ran in through the side door of the lounge and flung his hairy arms around me.

"Oather!"

"Congratulations, V.P." My friends often affectionately called me V.P.—my first two initials. "V.P., now I'll be your V.P.," Oather said, laughing raucously.

"I'm sorry, Oather," I said. "I really wish you had won."

"To win and feel sorry for your defeated opponent—that's a privilege of democracy." He began to spit some tobacco over my shoulder—he chewed a strong brand of tobacco called Bull Durham, or else smoked it in a corncob pipe. But he quickly stopped himself, doubtless realizing that he was in the lounge, not in the tobacco room in the basement.

"But the steampipes—"

"Hell's bells!" he exclaimed, shifting the tobacco in his mouth. "I did that knowing what I was doing. I wanted to be sure that you won. Besides, who said the steampipes had anything to do with it?"

We had been good friends before, but we were inseparable from that day on. He even helped me to free myself from Barbara. In my rather Indian way, I had got it into my head that my three dates with her were tantamount to a marriage proposal and that I couldn't possibly jilt her after that. But when I spoke to Oather about this he said, "Just don't ask her for another date, and she'll get used to being without you."

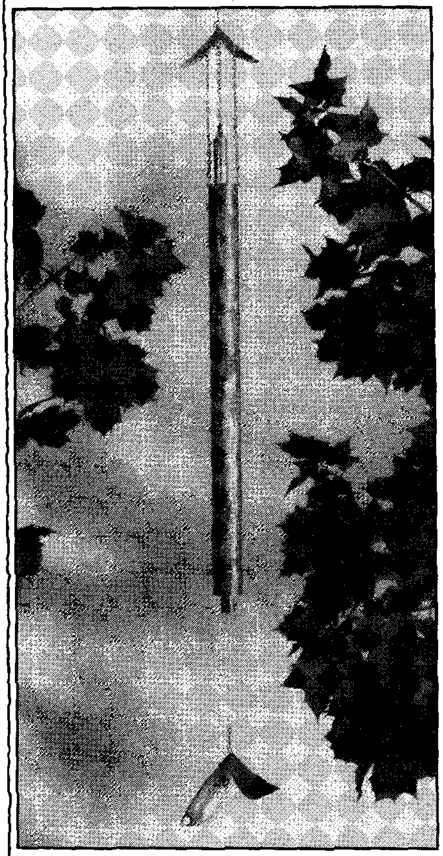
"But she'll be heartbroken," I said. "She'll think that I'm a cad—that I've taken advantage of her."

"The girls here don't think like that," he said. "You try out my technique, and, Whip, you will know that I'm as right as Joe Wright is wrong when he says the St. Louis Cardinals will win the World Series."

Oather *was* right. I didn't ask Barbara for a date again, and although she wrote me some powerful love letters from East St. Louis, Missouri, where she was spending the summer, she always concluded by saying that she knew in her heart of hearts that we were meant to be only friends.

WHAT I felt about girls and dates after the debacle with Barbara—as I thought of it—was influenced in some measure by a series of scandals during my last year at the school, 1951-52. (Thanks to correspondence courses I'd taken in the intervening summer, I had been able to skip the eleventh grade.) The first day of that school year, as I was sitting in the lounge, idle, Oather walked up and asked me if I had heard that Arlie Treadway and Vernelle Stewart got married over the summer. "Vernelle already has a baby, and Treadway isn't coming back to school," he added.

I was shocked and horrified, but



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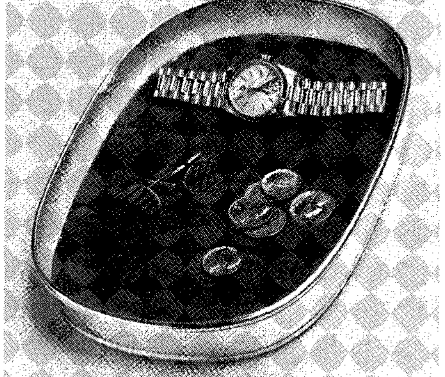

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then I thought, It's nonsense. It's malicious gossip. Treadway is one of my closest friends. He would never have kept something like that from me. He is so intelligent. He couldn't possibly have blundered into marriage. Anyway, Vernelle would have had to be pregnant for most of the last school year. How could she have fooled everyone and graduated, as she did?

"It's not like you to repeat such a terrible piece of gossip," I said to Oather, a little angrily. "I thought you were a good friend of Treadway's."

"I don't spread gossip," he said simply. "I had it from Mr. Hartman. Vernelle has a little boy."

I was stunned. The news had come from Mr. Hartman, the boys' physical-education teacher—it had to be true. Then I became disgusted—disgusted with Treadway and Vernelle for doing this dirty thing, with Oather and Mr. Hartman for bearing the news of it.

Soon everyone in the school was talking about the scandal. None of the boys could figure out how Vernelle's pregnancy was kept secret, or how Treadway, one of the most open and best-natured of the boys, could have been so cunning as to stop dating Vernelle for several months in the late winter and spring—as he did—and make us think that he was breaking up with her. Then Miss Harper volunteered the information that some of the sighted teachers in the girls' dormitory had known for part of the school year that Vernelle was pregnant but had *helped her to hide it, because they* wanted to see her graduate—she had been one of the school's star students. I was glad that Vernelle had been able to graduate. But she lacked any qualifications that would help her get a job. And Treadway had only finished eleventh grade. Moreover, she was nineteen and Treadway was only eighteen, and they were both totally blind. How would they manage? Who would give him a job? How could he ever support a family? The more I thought about it, the more my original disgust turned into sadness and into fear for their future.

I confided my feelings to Bruton and McNabb.

"It may be worse than you think," Bruton said. "Maybe they're not married at all. Maybe they've got an illegitimate son on their hands and are just saying they're married, so the school won't get a bad name."

"I don't want to hear such talk," I said. "I won't have my friend's reputation ruined."

"But Treadway's reputation is already ruined," McNabb said—he had an old man's voice, and sounded like a judge. "You can't get away from that."

A couple of days after the scandal broke, Mrs. Hankins, the school's secretary and bookkeeper, came and got me out of class, because Vernelle wanted to speak to me on the office telephone.

"Hello?" I said, scarcely able to keep the receiver steady on my ear.

"Ved, I just wanted you to know that we were secretly married last Thanksgiving," she said forthrightly. "The baby is fine."

"Why hasn't Treadway called me?" I asked. "I would have thought he'd tell me all about this himself. I had to hear everything in the dormitory as gossip, and I had no way of shutting people up."

"Didn't you know? Arlie was very sick all summer. For a while, he was on his deathbed. He just got up last week."

Vernelle didn't know exactly what Treadway's sickness had been, but she told me that he was well now and that both of them and the baby were off to Houston, where Treadway was going to look for a job as a piano tuner.

Here is Treadway, settling for just piano tuning, I thought. And he is so intelligent—much more intelligent than I am. Here is Treadway, throwing away his chance for education and a better life, and I had to wait so long and travel so far for that chance. But then I remembered that he had come from a broken home. Maybe he just needed some love and couldn't wait, I thought. I'm lucky to have my family behind me. Still, I have lost one of my closest friends. Who knows when, or if, we'll ever meet again? But, as Daddyji used to say, there is no sense in crying over spilt milk. At least Treadway and Vernelle are married. Maybe they are more courageous than all of us, trying to make a family in spite of their blindness.

Searching for something comforting to say to Vernelle on the telephone, I told her I was glad that Treadway had a skill he could turn to. I wished them the best of luck and hung up.

WHEN everyone got back from Christmas vacation that year, I learned from Mr. Chiles as we were coming out of the dining room that

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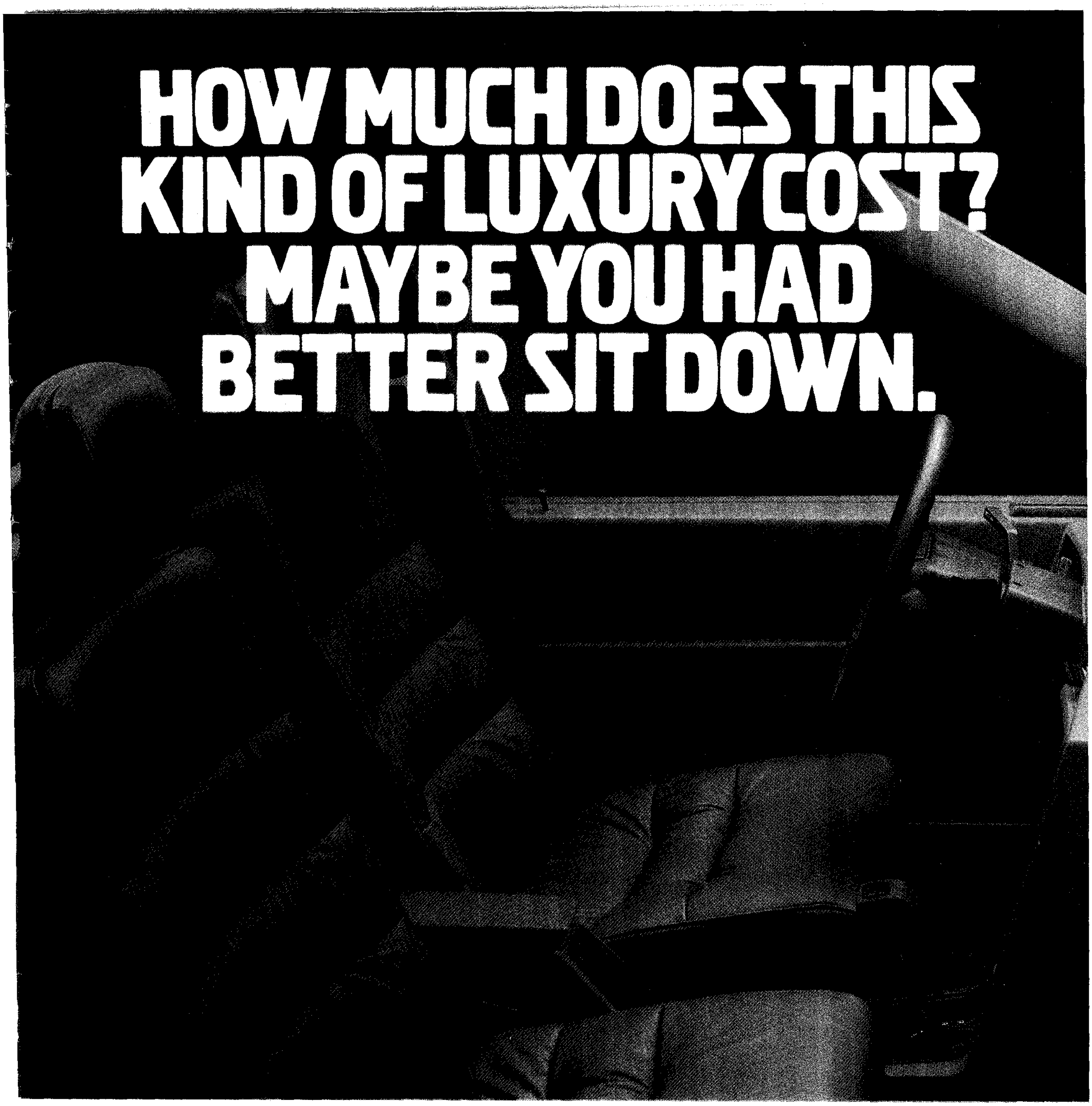

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Billy Tabor, a tenth grader, and Evelyn Worrell, an eleventh grader, had eloped and got married in Benton, a town twenty miles away. Billy and Evelyn would never have thought of doing this on their own, without the example of Treadway and Vernelle, I thought. They are not leaders, like Treadway and Vernelle. Teachers are always after them for not studying.

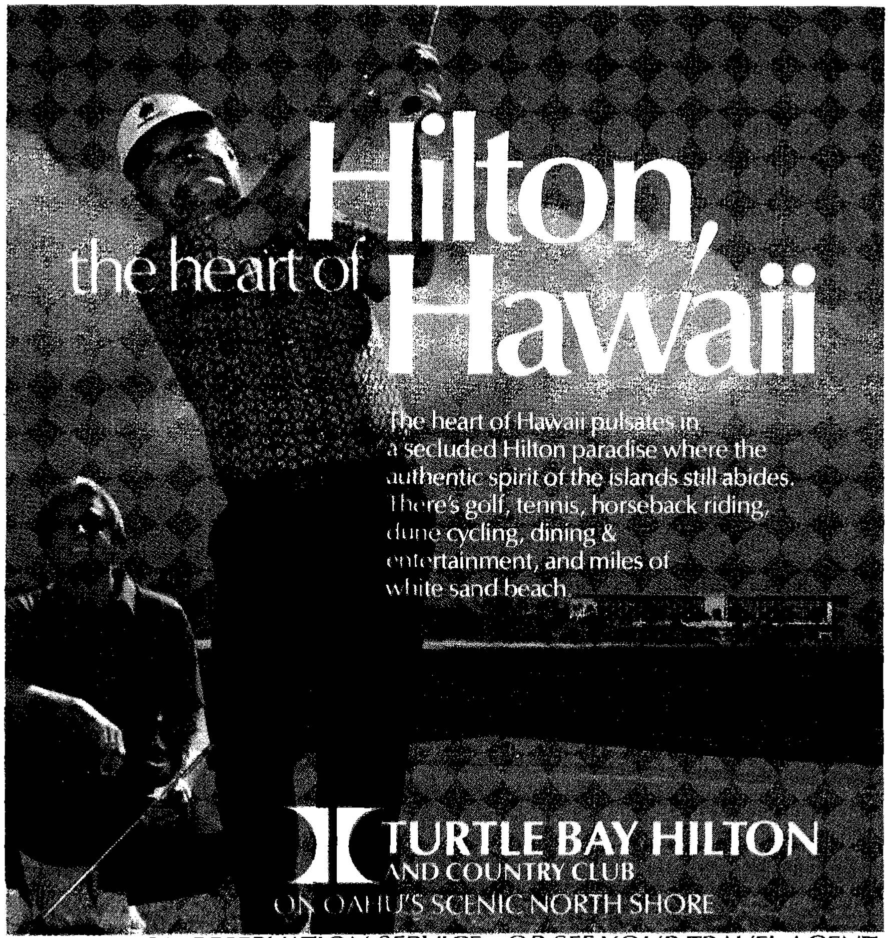
In the lounge, many boys were gathered around Mr. Hartman. "Do you know what?" he was saying gleefully. "Billy and Evelyn planned to keep their marriage secret and continue in school as if nothing had happened. The plan almost worked, but after what Treadway and Vernelle did I've been looking carefully at the papers, and, sure enough, I saw their names on the list of people who had taken out marriage licenses, and I showed it to Mr. Woolly. I'll bet they didn't know that things like that are published in newspapers. Billy doesn't have any special skills, and Evelyn has a temper. This is one hell of a marriage." Mr. Hartman fastened on me and said caustically, "You should be glad you don't have a girlfriend."

I blushed. I had been thinking about trying to get myself a girlfriend someday soon.

"Mr. Hartman, what's going to happen to Billy and Evelyn?" Fat Earnie asked. "They don't have a baby, and they live in Little Rock. We going to have married students in school now?"

"Billy and Evelyn? Why, they've been expelled," Mr. Hartman said. "And anyone else who tries a trick like that will be expelled, too." He really has a voice as penetrating as a siren, I thought. No wonder he is so good at drilling us in calisthenics.

But Mr. Hartman's words were belied almost at once, because, as it turned out, the parents of both Billy and Evelyn came to Mr. Woolly and pleaded with him to let their children continue in school while living in one of their homes. Although such an arrangement was unheard of, Mr. Woolly agreed. I decided that he didn't want to punish the two by depriving them of their education. Oather said to me philosophically, "Let's face it, Whip. Marriage is no crime, and Mr. Woolly is no judge. This here is the only state school for the blind in Arkansas, and any person who lives in the state and is legally blind and is not too old has a right to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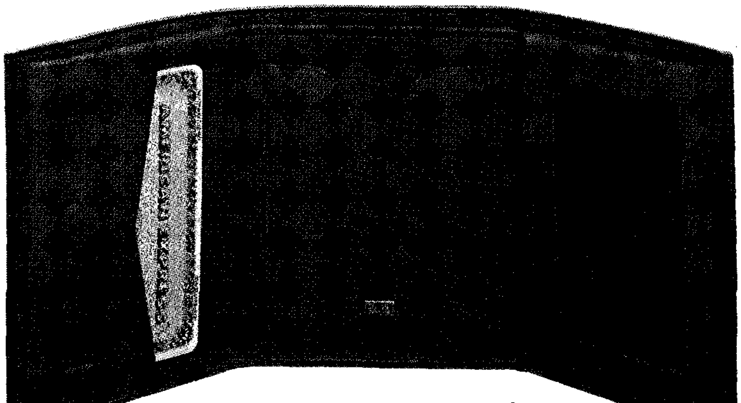

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study here. If you got married, you wouldn't want Mr. Woolly to throw you out, would you?"

"What if Evelyn has a baby?" I asked, ignoring his question but unable to leave the topic alone. "Would Mr. Woolly let her continue at school then?"

Oather was stumped.

The next day, Mr. Woolly announced in assembly, "I've made an exception for Billy and Evelyn, because there may be some confusion about what our policy for this kind of behavior is. Well, now I'll tell y'all our policy. The next time this kind of thing happens, the people involved will be expelled and I will hear no appeals. School is no place for marriage."

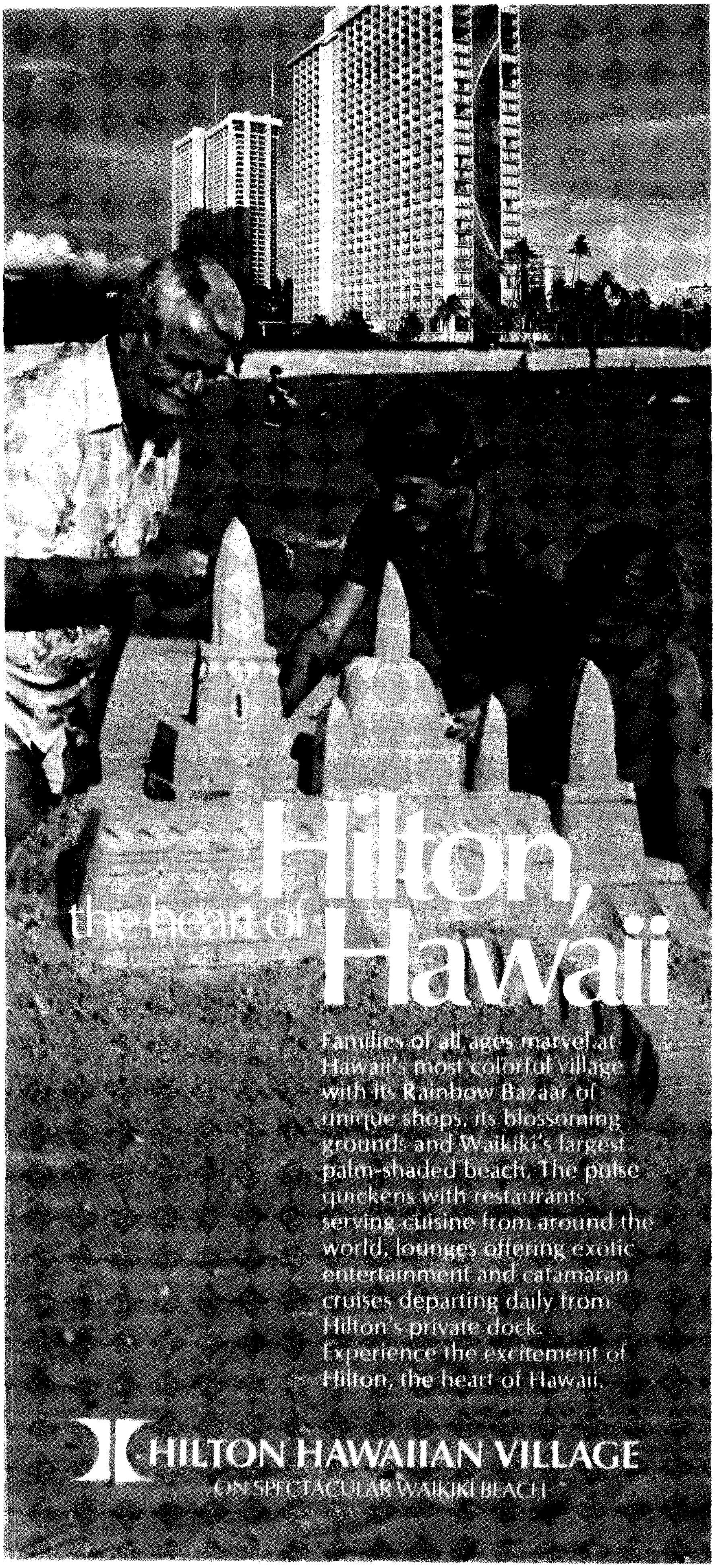
In the days and weeks that followed, I noticed that Billy and Evelyn didn't talk to us much and never stayed around for after-school activities. In fact, they stuck out among the students like two aliens. What a difference marriage makes, I thought. I feel sorry for them. Their love can only be an infatuation. They should have had enough self-control to resist the temptation. Look at me—I might have got involved with Barbara, but I didn't give in to the temptation.

BARELY a month after Billy and Evelyn's marriage, George Conner asked me to go with him for a walk in the woods in back of the school. He was nineteen and in tenth grade. He put an arm around my shoulder and drew me closer, and whispered, almost as if he feared that the trees would overhear him, "I'm going to tell you something that I haven't told a soul, because I knowed you could keep a secret. Phil and I have decided to go off to Benton and get ourselves married—we're on fire for each other." Mariann Phillips, his girl, was nineteen and in eleventh grade.

"I wish you hadn't told me," I said, and I instinctively drew away from him, but George continued to keep his arm around my shoulder. "You know Mr. Woolly will find out and expel you both."

"We're going to do it, sure as I'm standing here."

I was horrified. George was from a poor family, and although Phil was the only child of well-off people, she was adopted, and I feared that she might be disowned. How will they live, I thought. How will they manage? They are both likable, but George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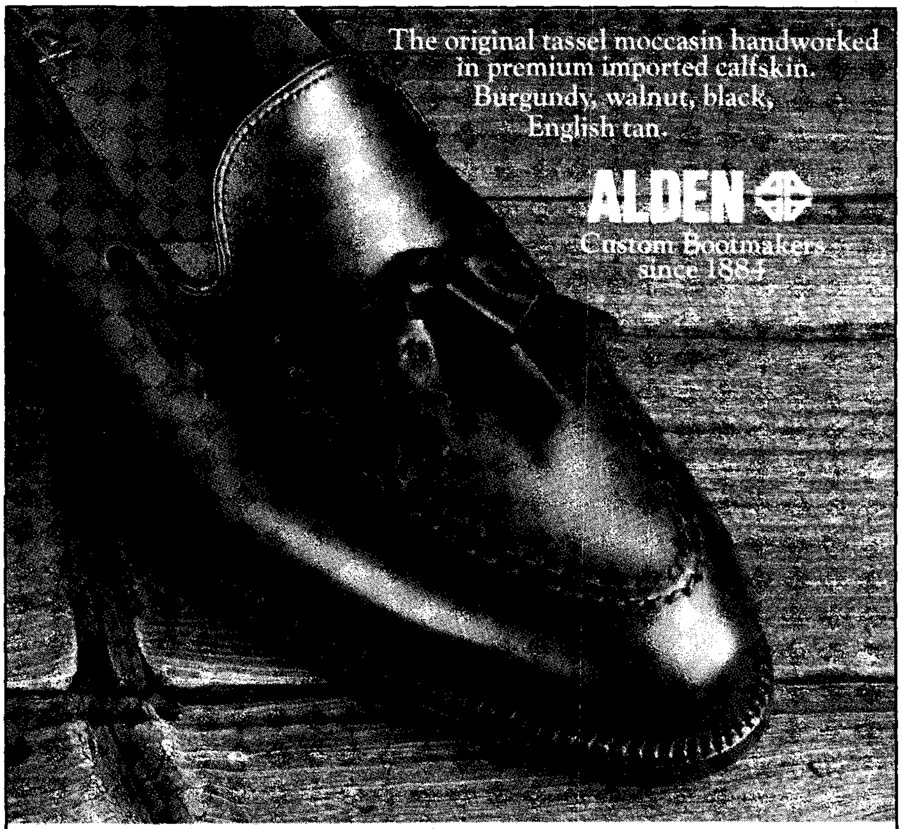

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is unambitious and Phil is strong-willed. They are headed straight for disaster.

"Damn it, George, I'm going to tell Mr. Woolly," I said.

"No, you ain't, Whip," he said. "You'd never do that to a buddy."

I argued and pleaded with him, but George's mind was made up—or, rather, I thought, had been made up for him by Phil, since I had never known him to take a strong stand on anything before. Anyway, I got nowhere with him.

That night and the next night, I didn't sleep at all. I felt indignant because George had burdened me with a confidence I didn't want. At the same time, I fretted about going to Mr. Woolly with it and informing on George. Yet I was the president of the school senate, and I felt responsible to the authorities. In the end, I went to Mr. Woolly and blurted it all out, trying to tell myself that I was being virtuous and doing my duty.

Even before I had finished, Mr. Woolly jumped out of his chair and left the office, saying, "Boy, I'm going to find George Conner and stop him if it's the last thing I do at this school. You sit right there."

I sat in Mr. Woolly's drafty, empty office, feeling as exposed as a shorn sheep. I wondered what Mr. Woolly would say to George, what George would say to him, and whether I had done the right thing. "I shouldn't look back," I told myself. "But this whole dating business won't leave me in peace."

"Son, you all right?" Mr. Woolly asked, coming back after what seemed a very long time.

"I think so," I said, my mouth as dry as if a dentist had his draining tube in it.

"I'm sure George told you what you told me," Mr. Woolly continued, sitting down. "But when I taxed him with it he denied everything. But now that he knows I'm on to him I don't think he'll try anything. I don't think so at all."

I didn't completely believe that George could have given up his plan. Everyone said that Phil could lead anyone into doing anything when she put her mind to it. But I kept quiet and left Mr. Woolly's office quickly.

I walked around the dormitory guiltily, avoiding George, thinking he must know that I had told on him. But later that day he came up to me on the little terrace outside the lounge and said, "Phil went and told some of her girlfriends. One of them squealed on us to Mr. Woolly."

I stood there, lacking the courage to own up. I thought about the honest cow that Bhabiji, my grandmother, used to tell us about when we were growing up. The cow had kept her appointment with the tiger even though she knew that he planned to devour her. George was no tiger. Still, I said nothing.

"Phil and me won't let nothing stop us," George was saying. "We just got to find a good time to sneak out of the school. Once we're married, Mr. Woolly will take us back, just like he did Billy and Evelyn. If not, we'll head west, like Treadway and Vernelle."

George sounded utterly in earnest. But carrying a tale once is enough, I thought. I did nothing about his fresh confidence.

A couple of weeks later, as I was coming down from the night session of study hall I heard a commotion from the direction of Mr. Woolly's office.

"You boys and girls were headed for Benton, weren't you?" Mr. Woolly was saying, in his normal voice. I marvelled at his calm manner; I found myself shaking all over.

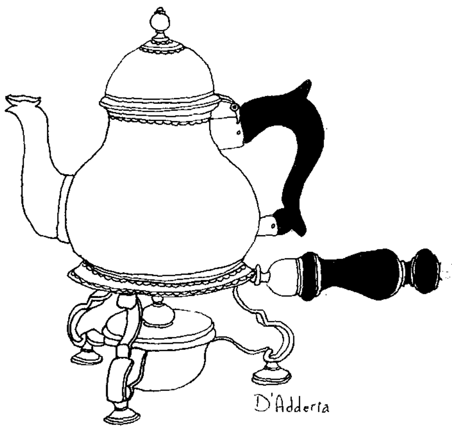
"You were going to get married, weren't you?" Mr. Robinson said accusingly. (Francis L. Robinson had come as our new principal at the beginning of the school year.)

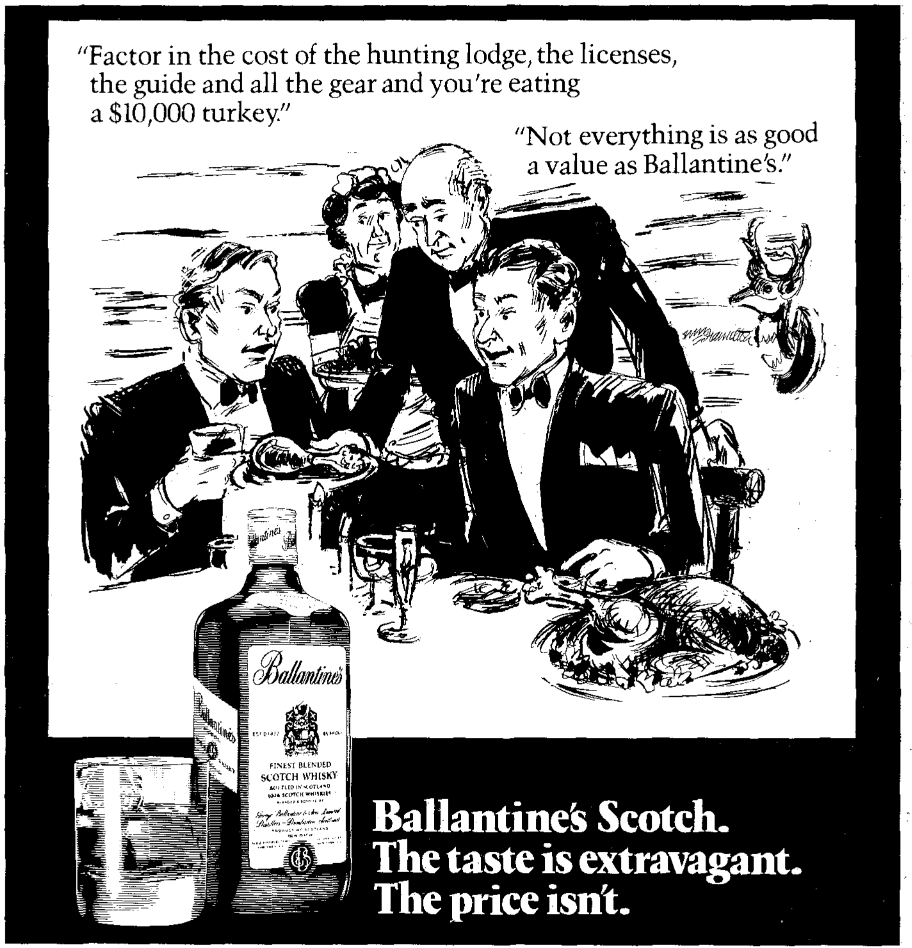
"Yes, sir," four—not two—voices said, one after another, as if answering a class roll call. To my horror, I recognized the voices not only of George and Phil but also of James Spakes and Peggy Stevens.

"Y'all didn't know—did you—that I had alerted the night watchman after I talked to you, George. We were ready for you."

I hurried away.

A few minutes later, George and James came into the locker room and

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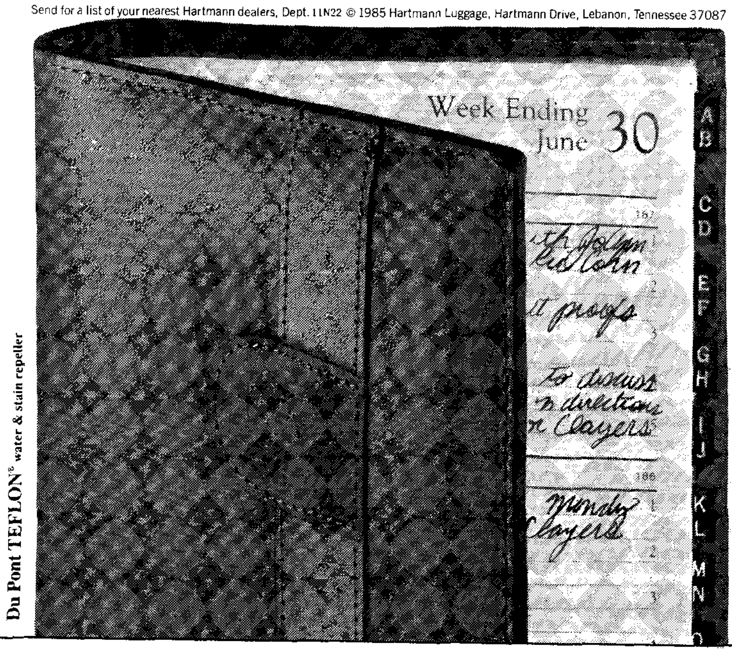
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started packing. When they were asked what they were doing, they said that Mr. Woolly had expelled them and their girls, and that they were all being put on buses to go home. They wouldn't say more—they seemed determined to keep their own counsel. The sounds of their locker doors opening and their suitcases hitting the locker-room bench crashed in my ears like so many shouted reproaches. I am partly responsible, I thought. It's awful. I consoled myself by thinking that if Mr. Woolly had made an example of Billy and Evelyn the new scandal might not have happened. Then George, James, Phil, and Peggy would all have been able to graduate in a year or two. Now they had lost their chance for an education, along with their reputations.

I walked out of the locker room and out of the lounge. I wanted to be by myself. Treadway and Vernelle, Billy and Evelyn, George and Phil, James and Peggy—what can they possibly know about life and marriage, I thought. American teen-agers can't have much foresight. They let one event lead to another. They don't think about consequences. They might as well set out on life's road with their legs in irons. Such thoughts made me feel older and different, underscoring my feeling of separateness from people in the school, in Arkansas, in America.

EVEN before this latest school scandal, Daddyji had given me the shocking news that my first cousin Surinder Mehta, Yog's younger brother, who was studying in Corvallis, Oregon, had eloped with a nineteen-year-old American coed named Jackie. Both Surinder and Jackie were underage, and to get married they had had to travel to another state, where parental consent was not required.

Surinder was scarcely a year older than I was, and had come to America just a year before I did, over the objections of many relatives, who had said that he was too young to go to the West and if he did go he would be corrupted by the loose Western morals. The same relatives had made similar objections to my coming. (They had not objected to Cousin Yog's coming to America, precisely because he was over eighteen and so, they thought, had a firm grip on Indian values.) Although Surinder and I hadn't been much in touch with each other in America—Oregon seemed as far away as another country—we had so much in common that I felt almost as if I myself had fallen desperately in love and eloped. I felt the ground underfoot giving way, shaking my belief that Surinder was mature and I was mature and American teen-agers were not; that a mature person eschewed temporary pleasures for permanent ones; that love was not an act, like falling out of a boat or running away and getting married, but a process, like the growth of a tree or my own parents' marriage, which had taken years of sacrifice and adjustment to become serene. It was that ground to which I had clung tenaciously, as to a piece of India, while I was buffeted by the winds and waters of the New World. I felt that I knew nothing about anything anymore, that now I would always be adrift on an uncharted sea.

ALTHOUGH it was April, there was no hint of flowers. It had been raining continuously for days. There was no letup in the head cold I got in Arkansas every fall and had until the spring. Surinder seemed to be always on my mind, and I had a premonition that something bad was about to happen to me.

I was at the annual party the juniors gave for the seniors—I was to graduate in less than two months. The party was being held in the small but comfortable Cottage, where a few of the junior and senior girls lived, learning home economics from Miss Eula Shults. To my surprise, Lois Woodward, who was Raymond Rodgers' steady, arrived at the party alone.

"Where is Raymond?" I asked, going up to her.

"We've broken up," she said sadly. So she has finally realized that that childish Raymond is not right for her, I thought. She should feel happy.

She stayed around me, as if I were her date. It's natural, I thought. Oather and I are the only ones here without dates, and she wouldn't want to be around Oather, because he once dated her and then quit her. Poor Lois! She hasn't had good luck with boys.

I recalled that when I came to the school, almost three years earlier, she had been Big Jim Pickett's girl. Big Jim was a senior then, and she was in the ninth grade with me. Months before he graduated, he had quit her. After that, she had no dates for almost a year. Everyone could tell that she was depressed. At parties, she would dance the minimum number of dances required to get good character marks

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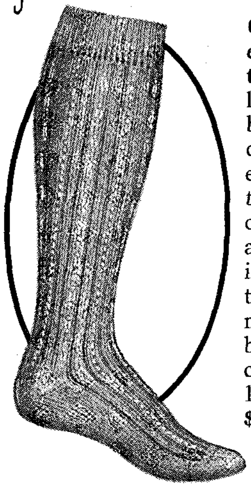

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in social adjustment, and during the punch-and-cookie time, instead of standing around the punch bowl and laughing and talking, as the rest of us did, she would stand alone by the wall until a teacher went up to her and made her join us. She was a small person with a small voice, and had always sounded a bit squinched up and sad, but during those dateless months her voice sank still lower. She was a clarinettist, and even her clarinet playing lacked her old energy. It was around that time that Oather, in his good-hearted way, had asked her for a date and taken her to a few parties. After that, Pat Thennes, who was sixteen and in the fourth grade, started dating her. We'd never heard of a tenth grader dating a fourth grader. Moreover, Lois was smart and likable, and Pat was lazy and quarrelsome. But Pat, too, soon quit her. Fat Earnie said, "Now she'll never get a date again. Who wants to date a girl who's been thrown over by Pat Thennes?" My heart went out to her then, but there was nothing I could do; I was already becoming interested in Barbara, and wrestling with my Indian morality so that I could get up the courage to ask her out. Then McNabb had got the idea of getting Raymond to ask Lois out. Raymond griped all the time (no one griped more), and McNabb thought that if he got a girl he would have something else to think about—or maybe McNabb was just being mischievous. But Raymond, who was sixteen, was in seventh grade and very immature, and McNabb was afraid that he wouldn't ask Lois for a date if he thought other people wanted him to. So McNabb put the idea into Raymond's head in such a way that Raymond thought he *himself* had come up with it. Anyway, Raymond asked Lois to a dance, and before anyone knew it they were going around as a couple. And now, after going steady for nearly a year, they had broken up. I was sure that it was the best thing that could have happened to Lois.

Presently, Miss Shults put a record on the phonograph, and I raised Lois's hand, took her firmly by the waist, and stepped out on the floor. She felt easy to dance with—even more so than she had at other parties. She was slender and had a good sense of rhythm, and she seemed relaxed, for her.

Before I knew it, it was time to go home. Boys and their dates started filing out to walk back to the girls' side. Assuming that Lois would walk back with Mr. Chiles, the chaperon for the

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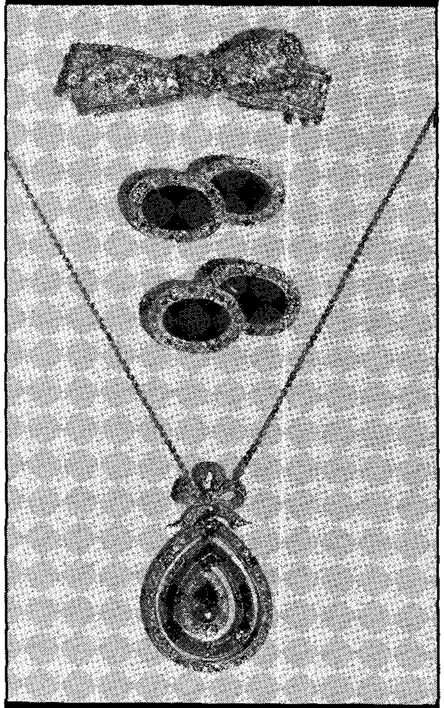

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party, I started toward Oather, in order to walk back to the boys' dormitory with him. But he said, "Whip, why don't you walk Lois home?" Oather had a voice that carried, and Lois had heard him. I have no choice but to be a gentleman, I thought. I went over to her.

The half-dozen other couples walked ahead, with Mr. Chiles following at a discreet distance. As chaperon, he had to make sure that there was no hanky-panky; at the same time, he had to allow couples some privacy along the way in which to say their good nights. He let Lois and me follow him, perhaps because we were not going steady and he knew we were not likely to do anything improper.

In order to make the most of the few minutes' walk to the girls' side, everyone dawdled, taking a few steps and then stopping to whisper and kiss. Although the footsteps and whispered endearments sounded loud in the still night air, and Mr. Chiles had very good hearing, I wondered how much he could really tell by just listening—I certainly couldn't tell who was kissing whom. Yet I reflected that Mr. Woolly couldn't entrust chaperoning only to sighted teachers, for that would make Mr. Chiles a second-class citizen in a school for the blind.

Since Lois and I had never walked together, we felt awkward.

"My hands feel cold," Lois said. The rain had stopped, and the air was cool.

"Here, put your hand in my pocket," I said, wondering as I said it if my bluejeans were too tight.

She slipped her hand in my pocket. It was so thin and small that I could scarcely feel it.

A dog barked somewhere. It must be Fritz, I thought—Mr. Woolly's watchdog. Fritz is never off duty.

I put my arm around Lois's waist and leaned toward her. Her hair was lightly scented. She is a small, slight girl, I thought, so she probably has a small, compact face. If I am going to get a kiss from her, I'll have to do it quickly. Why should I not avail myself of the chance? But the idea of touching her lips filled me with terror.

We were almost at the door of the girls' dormitory. With my facial vision, I sensed a sound-shadow—a slim lamppost looming a few inches ahead. I stopped abruptly. Lois walked smack into it.

She cried out and jerked her hand out of my pocket. A pain went through my heart. If only I'd been more careful, I thought—if only I hadn't been thinking about her lips. Yet I tried to tell myself that the lamppost was right in front of her door and she must have known about it almost from the day she arrived at the school.

I touched her face. She had not hit her forehead, as I'd feared, but had taken the blow on the cheek, which was more resilient. Still, it was swelling up.

I blew into my clean handkerchief and got it as warm as I could, then gently pressed it to her bump. She drew back from me as if she thought I was being forward, or as if she blamed me for not saving her from the lamppost in the first place.

I squeezed her dainty hand with my free one, and she relaxed. I even thought she gave my hand a squeeze back. Oh, what bliss, I thought. I again pressed the handkerchief on her bump. My heart started beating rapidly.

I let go of her hand and felt her shoulder through her blouse. I stroked her soft neck, ran my fingers through her soft hair. I thought of how smooth

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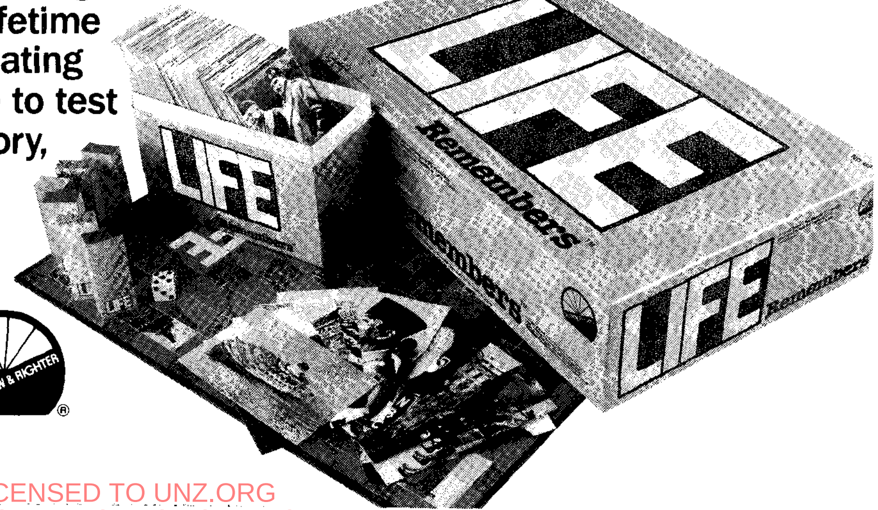

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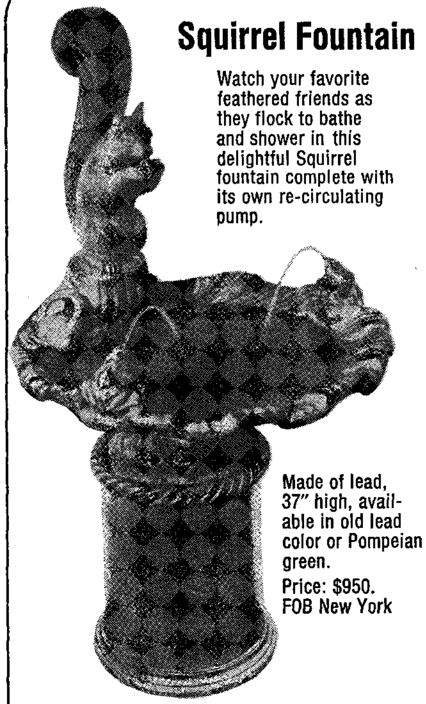

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her skin was, how small her waist was, how dainty she was in every way, how pretty. I tried not to think of the fact that she was Raymond's long-time steady, and told myself that she couldn't have cared for him—that she must have dated him to save face after being dropped by Pat Thennes. Suddenly, reason left me. I moved to kiss her, but the act of kissing on the mouth was so foreign to my upbringing that I had a fit of trembling. I tried to master my trembling, but "temporary pleasure, temporary pleasure," Daddyji's warning refrain, beat in my head.

Mr. Chiles cleared his throat, as he was known to do when he thought that couples were misbehaving. "Ved and Lois!" he called. "What's keeping you two?" He added kindly, "Y'all know Mr. Woolly wants good nights to be short."

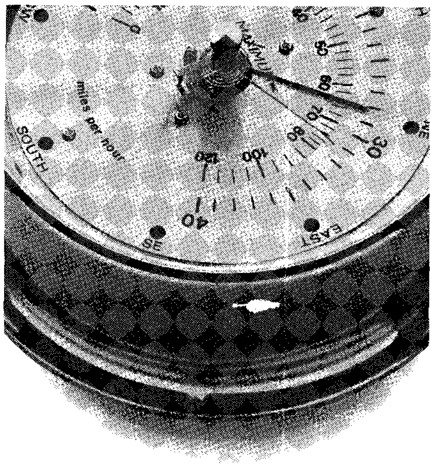
It had begun to drizzle. Tiny raindrops flew about our faces in a thin spray of disapproval.

"We're coming, Mr. Chiles," Lois and I said, almost together.

I had missed the chance to get my first kiss. I had an overwhelming feeling of sadness, like a wave breaking inside me.

Back in the dormitory, I couldn't go to sleep. I didn't know how my love had happened. I had always thought of myself as a realistic person, who had better sense than to give in to such things. Like Oather, I had often felt that I was lucky not to have a girl, not to have the extra worry and the extra burden, but, rather, to be independent and concentrate on my studies. I used to lecture my blind friends, saying that we, even more than sighted people, had to look to permanent pleasures. Now here I was, just after my eighteenth birthday, within reach of my graduation, so much in love with Lois that I would have eloped with her, like Surinder with Jackie, and married her right then and there, come what might—even if I were expelled, like George and Phil, James and Peggy, or just left school, like Treadway. They say opportunity knocks only once, and I've missed the opportunity to kiss Lois and make her mine, I thought. I've missed the boat. I'll never find anyone like Lois again. I will always be a bachelor, like Mr. Chiles—and a lonely foreigner besides.

I WAS in the locker room getting dressed for a band engagement in Benton—I played accordion in the band. I was wondering why it was



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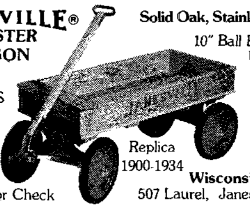

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that I had been tongue-tied around Lois since the night of the party the week before.

McNabb walked in. "Raymond, you've got lipstick on your shirt," he said, in his most mournful voice.

"What about it?" Raymond said. "It's Lois's lipstick. She must have got it on me at the square-dance club last night."

My legs practically collapsed under me. I had missed the square dance, and Lois had apparently gone back to Raymond, just as if she and I had never taken that momentous walk. If I had only been able to tell Lois what was in my heart, if I had only been able to tell her how much I loved her, if I had only sealed my love with a kiss, she wouldn't have done this to me, I thought.

I managed to finish dressing and carry my accordion out to the school bus.

Lois stepped in just ahead of me with her clarinet. Once I was aboard, I waited to see whether she would sit alone or with another band member. She sat by herself next to a window. I somehow fitted my accordion under the seat and slid in beside her.

We were sitting fairly near the back, away from everyone else. Perhaps I haven't missed out altogether, I thought. Perhaps I can create another opportunity. Benton is twenty miles away, and the bus ride will give me plenty of time. People elope to Benton—it's a romantic trip.

I had a reckless urge to reach over and grab Lois—to kiss her, and hang the school rules. I said to myself, "If she doesn't coöperate, I'll do it anyway, even if I have to force her." At the same time, something in me wouldn't let me forget the lipstick on the shirt, the morals I'd grown up with, the little time I had left till graduation. Yet that urge to possess her anyhow wouldn't leave me. I felt wretched. I had never experienced such strong feelings before, and they were so contradictory. *Yes, kiss her. No, don't kiss her.* I prayed to God to give me will power, to let me pass my remaining weeks at the school in peace and purity of thought, to keep me from doing something untoward that would ruin my record at school and the reputation of the girl I loved, to let me graduate with glory. I suddenly found that I had discovered real faith. I redoubled my prayers, telling God that I needed His help more than ever before, that I had no one to turn to but Him, because the days of face-to-face confi-

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dences with members of my family had ended forever when I left home for Arkansas. Still, I felt lost and lonely. To try to get strength from on high, I kept repeating to myself, "God, I won't kiss. I won't kiss Lois. God, this is my age for education, not sex."

"Lois, can I take you to the dance next Saturday?" I finally asked weakly, telling myself that I was striking a compromise between my physical urges and my principles, even as I moved closer to her, so that our hips and legs touched.

"No, thank you," she said, without a moment's hesitation, primly moving toward the window. "You know I'm Raymond's girl."

I was crushed and angry at the same time. I wondered whether I would be able to get through the band program, whether I would ever be able to concentrate in class again. I had a sinking feeling that something grave, troublesome, and irksome had permanently settled in my soul.

To hide my feelings, I got up and started walking up and down the aisle, cracking jokes with everyone on the bus. For all anyone knows, I thought, I'm hail-fellow-well-met, but inside I'm dying. O poet, if I had your pen I could express my grief!

That night, as I was going to sleep, I said to myself that I wasn't going to let my romantic love get the better of me. I wasn't going to allow myself to love. I had too many responsibilities. I would marry for more solid reasons than love. Yet I felt that sighs were concealed in my breathing, that tears were in my eyes. I wished I didn't have to see Lois every time I turned around. My mind was in a million pieces.

OATHER stood behind me at the sink, the rough fingers of one of his hands running down my cheek and the cold steel of the safety razor in his other hand following the path traced by his fingers. I rinsed the shaving brush under hot water, swished it around in a mug with a little cake of scented soap in it, and applied more lather to my face as he told me to, being careful to apply the foamy film evenly.

"You're eighteen and you never shaved before," Oather was saying. "Man, we got boys here shaving at thirteen and fourteen."

"How did you learn to shave?" I asked, mumbling through the soap.

"Just like you're doing—but hold still, don't talk."

Ever since I could remember, I had been eager to have a beard to shave. I remembered taking Mamaji's little scissors from her sewing basket and running them across my upper lip when no one was looking—snipping and hoping. I got a fuzzy mustache when I was fourteen, but the beard wouldn't come. It had just sprouted over the past weekend, like the tender grass outside with the arrival of spring. It made me realize that I didn't even own a razor, let alone know how to hold one. The night before, I had stayed awake wondering whom to turn to, whom to tell about my predicament. I wished Daddyji were there. I wished for any male relative at all. My face felt itchy and grubby, as if it were caked with mud. I felt I couldn't let it go for another day. Finally, I took Oather into my confidence.

"Whip with whiskers!" he cried, and laughed and laughed, but not at all unkindly. He accompanied me to Stifft's Station and helped me buy the shaving things. Back in the locker room, he made me strip to the waist and marched me to the sink. It was late afternoon, and the locker room was mercifully empty.

The razor in Oather's hand seemed to slither around my ear, and I jumped.

"Whip, when you shave you have to keep your face steady," Oather admonished.

I tried to keep my head still, and touched Oather's hand holding the razor in order to get a sense of its tilt and movement. I noticed that he was pulling my cheek taut with one hand and following its plane with the razor. I wondered how it was that people shaving didn't cut themselves up, and whether I would really be able to finish shaving myself, as he'd said I would. Shaving seemed at once an extremely easy and a frighteningly difficult task.

Shaving at a locker-room sink is so different from the way Daddyji shaves at home, I thought. He would shave sitting in his pajamas and dressing gown, a bath towel tied around his neck and his shaving things arrayed on a folding table in front of him. Now and again, he would shake his razor in a glass of hot water, the sound reminding me of Blackie—a dog we'd once had—shaking herself, making her dog tags clink and her ears flap. There was something very comforting about the gentle brushing sound of his razor against his skin—as comforting

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as the sound of Mamaji's knitting needles clicking through the day. We children would gather around him and have perhaps the most relaxed conversation of the day with him.

"You see, you've got to pull the razor along quickly, or the lather will dry out and the razor will catch at your beard," Oather was saying, even as the soap was drying on my face. I applied more. As Oather continued shaving me, it seemed that sometimes I had too much lather on my face and sometimes not enough. Sometimes the razor in Oather's hand seemed to skid over the soap without shaving the beard. Sometimes it dragged, as if it would shave my cheek off.

I now tilted my head to offer a better surface for the razor, but at the same time my cheek seemed to twitch and jump involuntarily. Now, though, Oather insisted that I should try to shave myself. He handed me the razor and showed me how to shave first one side of my neck and then the other, how to push my tongue behind my upper lip and then my lower lip to shave the corners under my nose and then the crease between my lower lip and my chin—his hand guiding me all the while, helping me to move the razor in little, well-aimed strokes. Now he praised and now he corrected, now he laughed and now he whistled, giving the task a certain lightness.

Under his direction, I rinsed off my face, splashing water on a few spots where I'd nicked myself. Then I examined my face to make sure that I had left no patch of beard unshaved. Running my fingers all over its tingling, fresh surface, I felt I was "seeing" my face for the first time, as if my fingers had the reflecting power of the shaving mirror that I couldn't use. I am finally a man, I thought. I have a beard and I know how to handle a razor. I felt almost as if I could see.

"I WANTED to know what it feels like not to see," she said, fiddling with her umbrella and nervously tapping it on the floor of the bus. "So I blindfolded myself an hour or so at a time—oh, not every day at first, but once a week or so. You see, I work at the rehabilitation center for the blind, and I'd seen these people coming and going, day after day, and really had no idea what it felt like. It—I mean blindfolding myself—was the strangest experience of my life. I got vertigo. The world seemed to be turned upside down. Every little noise was amplified, became irritating. The

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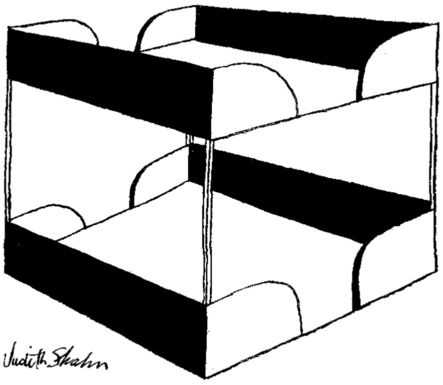
typewriter next door sounded like elephants stomping. And then there was this panic that rose up in my chest like a huge glob of phlegm and practically choked me. I couldn't stop crying, actually sobbing. All I had to do was take off the blindfold. I knew that. But I wanted to see how long I could stand it—how many hours at a time, how many days in a row." Although we were in public, her way of talking was so discreet and soft that I felt we were having a conversation in private. "You won't believe it, but the simplest action, like opening a Coke bottle, took me five minutes. And I had no energy. It was as though a steamroller had run over me, flattened me out—left me feeling like a corpse. Now, at the rehabilitation center I'd heard other social workers speak about people experiencing blindness as a form of death. I couldn't understand it—why the loss of eyesight should be felt that way. But blindfolding myself made me realize how total that loss must be, how much like death it must be. Taking the blindfold off was almost like experiencing resurrection. I think all blind people must need to have some kind of daily spiritual resurrection to keep going."

I listened to her spellbound, without nodding, without making the usual sounds of acknowledgment, for fear of stopping her flow. Listening to her, I felt that she was verbalizing thoughts that I had had, but thoughts so shadowy I could scarcely articulate them to myself. I felt that she had somehow managed to bridge the gulf between the seeing and the unseeing—that in some way she had become one of us. There wasn't a hint of "you blind people" in her way of speaking.

"Well, goodbye, then," she said. The bus was at a stop and she got off. A few minutes later, I couldn't be sure whether she had been a real person or an apparition, whether she'd been sitting there next to me or I'd fallen asleep and dreamed her. I just heard



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her wispy but clear voice in my head, and had an urgent sense of longing to speak to her more, to learn more about my experience through her.

I never saw her again, but I remember the conversation as if it were taking place today. Although she spoke to me only because I was blind, she happened to put in crystalline form certain of my elusive recurring thoughts—thoughts I had then and still have.

A Leaf, a Stem

To a Blind Son

Because I cannot tilt your head and say,
"See! Those are stars—and that a moon—
And this is twilight, when a dying day
Slides gray and silent like a fading tune
From memory. And there, across the sky,
In wide, gay arching is a rainbow. See
How gold it is, how lavender, how shy
And pastel is its color. Look, my son, with me."

Since this I cannot do, I take your hand
And teach it how to touch a leaf, a stem,
And how distinguish snow or grass or sand,
And tell you, as I can, of all of them.
And somehow, you and I can learn how much
Of beauty like the stars there is to touch.

—*Anonymous, Arkansas Braille News, February, 1950.*

SOME excerpts from the last year of a journal I kept while I was in Little Rock:

September 9

Oather and Bruton were suddenly here, as if they'd never been away for the summer. Oather had brought some wieners from home, and we three struck out for the woods at the back of the gymnasium to cook them. Bruton got hold of a piece of tin and hammered it into shape to put under the fire, while Oather and I scrambled about looking for firewood and roasting sticks. Within a few minutes, we were sitting around the fire roasting our wieners, our sticks touching.

Bruton said that he had met a woman back home who had asked him why he needed sleep, since his eyes were closed all the time. Oather said that he'd met a woman in his home town who thought that blind people had to have strings running from their forks and knives to their mouths to eat. I don't think we've ever laughed so much.

September 12

Miss Harper told us that over the summer she had done some more square dancing and learned some new square-dance calls—Four-Gent Star, Cowboy Loop, Down the Center, Paul Jones, Sally Goodwin, Swing in the

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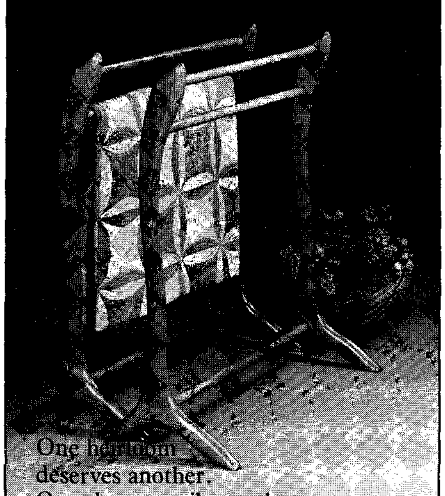

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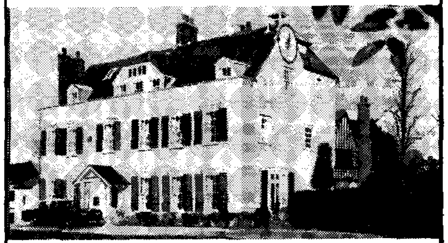

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Hall. I am in charge of recording good fiddle music off the radio on my tape recorder and bringing it to the square-dance club gatherings in the gymnasium every Wednesday.

September 15

Oather read out to us a dumb poem from an old issue of the *Arkansas Braille News* that a father wrote about a blind son. We decided that the father couldn't have had a blind son—just made him up for the poem.

September 17

Mr. Woolly told me that a Dr. Ray Penix has given the school a white wolfhound called Igor. No one at school has a Seeing Eye dog, and Dr. Penix wanted the school to get interested in the Seeing Eye dog program. Mr. Woolly appointed me to try out Igor.

I was utterly astonished by Igor. He was almost as tall as a little donkey and was fitted up with a harness and a stiff handle through which I could feel practically his every movement. I took him to Stifft's Station. He stopped when we came to the intersection and didn't move until the light was in our favor. Yet I found having him along somewhat awkward. On the sidewalk, people made a show of giving us a wide berth, or complimented me for being his owner. I felt as if I had a performing bear on a chain. Igor is not much use to me, but he would be a great help for people like Norman Penix [no relation] who have a hard time getting around, because they lost their sight later in life. I told all this to Mr. Woolly.

September 18

I am now one of the twelve vending-stand operators. We get one dollar a week. We have just worked out a schedule for manning the stand. I am learning how to keep a daily record of purchases and profits, reorder stock, pay the bills.

September 20

It was a lovely autumn day. Joe Wright got hold of a softball and a bat. Oather, Bruton, and I went out and stood in the open space under the locker-room window and took turns batting. Joe aimed at the bat—he has just enough sight for that. We listened to the sound of the ball, calculated its speed as it sailed through the air, and tried to hit it. I thought that we would get tired of the monotony of just standing there and batting, but we

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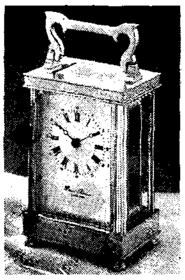

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didn't. After an hour or so of playing our version of baseball, we hardly missed a pitch.

September 21
Today I became a full-fledged member of the band. There are nine other members. We will be playing simple swing music, and sometimes someone will sing. For every public engagement each of us will be paid five dollars in cash.

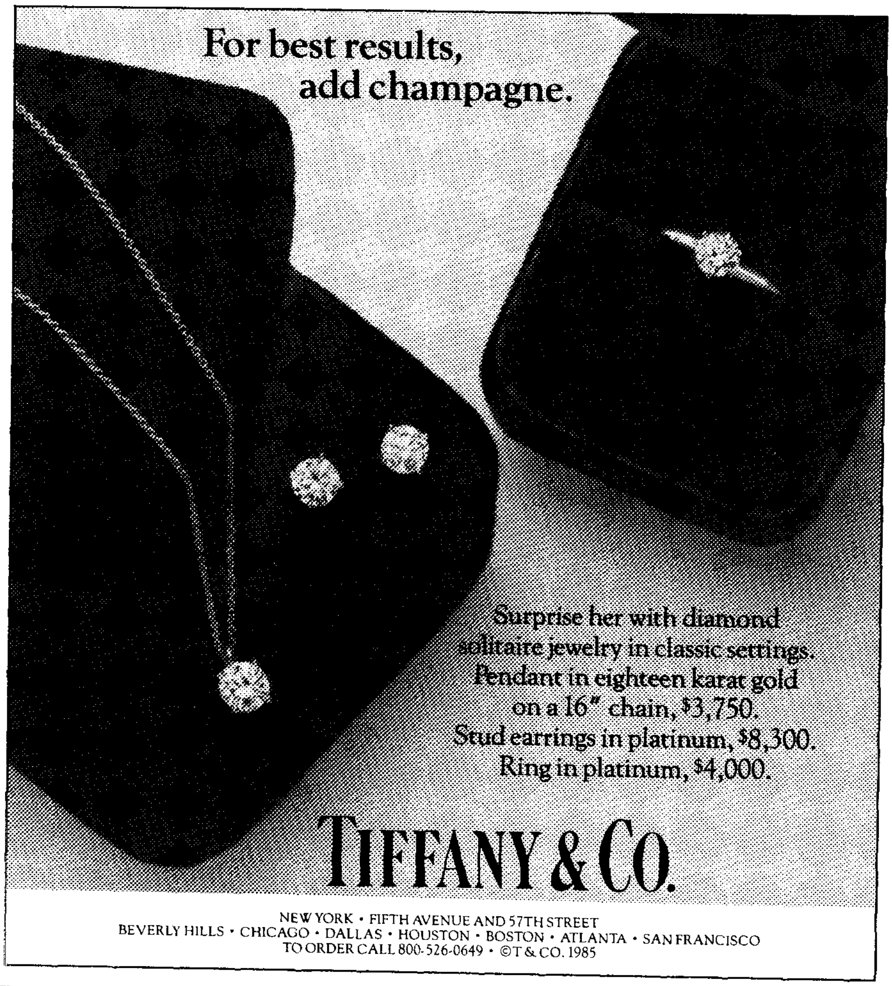
October 15
The city council had this terrible idea of taxing Seeing Eye dogs and banning them from city buses. I represented Mr. Woolly before the city council, along with the members of the Little Rock Braille Club, and lobbied against the measures. So today, Dr. Ray Penix, with his Dalmatian, Susie; Elsie Arnold, with her German shepherd, Shep; Paddy Driscoll, a war veteran, with his boxer, Tina; and Igor and I presented our case. The council members were much impressed, and pictures of us and our dogs will appear tomorrow in the *Arkansas Democrat*. I found the whole experience exciting but humiliating. I like politics, but people have to do embarrassing things to get ahead in it.

October 18
Igor was sent back to Dr. Penix today, because we have no good place to keep a dog. The faculty decided that no one needs a Seeing Eye dog to get around the school.

October 25
Mr. Woolly announced in assembly that every Wednesday at the noon meal two students would eat in the faculty dining room and two teachers would eat in the student dining room. In that way, every student would have a chance to eat among sighted people at least twice a year.

November 15
I've been thinking about Uma Vasudev. She was Sister Nimi's best friend. She used to come over in Simla and play chess with me until three o'clock in the morning. How I miss her! The old days will never come back. When I get back home I'll be too big to just sit with a girl and play chess late into the night.

December 8
I was standing in the office talking to Mr. Chiles when the phone rang. On the other end was Mr. Rob-



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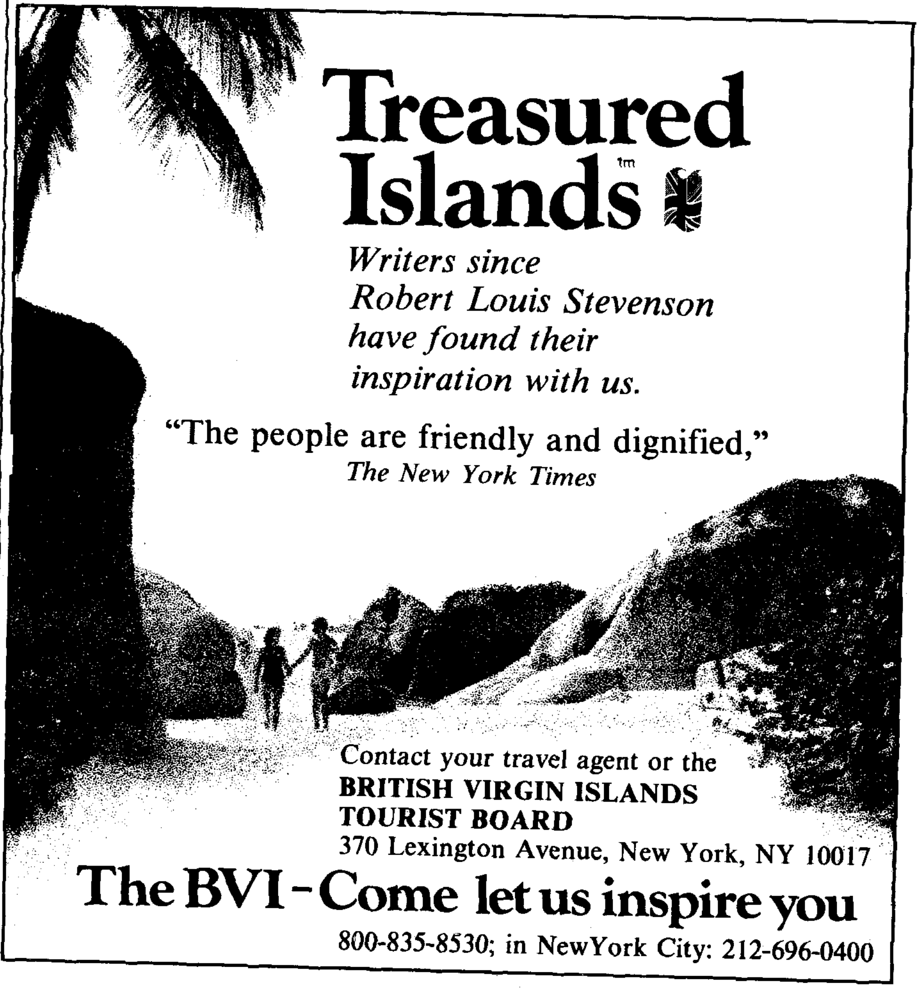

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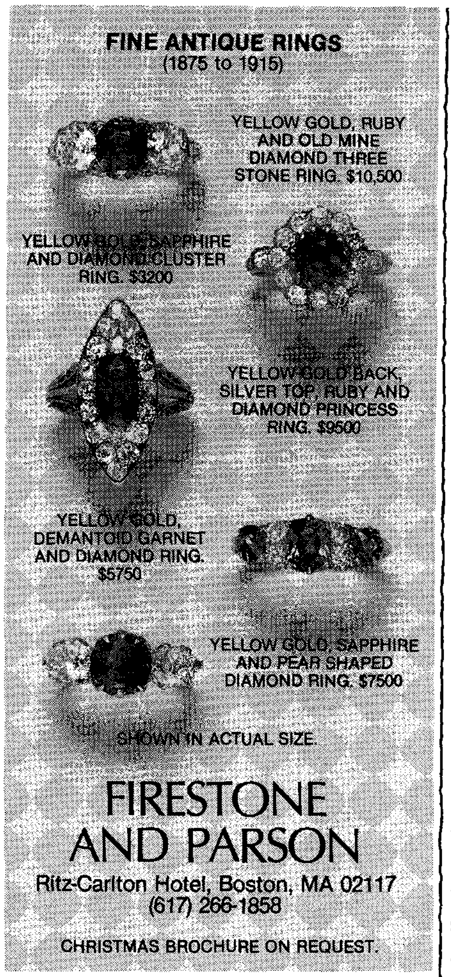

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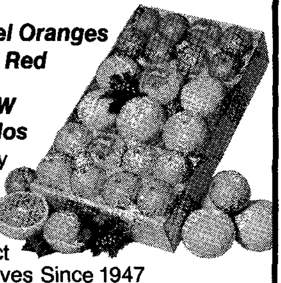

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inson. He said that he could only find one teacher who could give blood for Miss Harper's father. He has a bleeding ulcer and a collapsed lung. He had already had thirty-five pints of blood. Since Miss Harper's family would have to pay for the blood if they couldn't replace it, I went to Mr. Woolly and asked if we students could help out. He said we could try. Twelve of us went down to the hospital. My heart was pounding. The thought of the needle in my arm was very vivid and frightening, but I had to be brave and set a good example. The nurse said I wasn't of age but that I could give blood anyway by diplomatically lying on the form, and this I did.

George Conner went in first and came out after some time, rubbing his arm. Then Bruton went in, but he came right back out—his blood pressure was too low. Then I was called. I went in feeling brave and strong. The nurse took some blood from my finger for a test and said that my blood was fine. She gave me a jab with a needle in my arm, to deaden it, then a jab with another needle. This time, she somehow strapped the needle to my arm. It was in for fifteen minutes.

After giving blood, I felt pretty low —I didn't have my old energy. But it was wonderful to do something for Miss Harper in return for all that she has done for us.

December 10

We senators decided today to take some of the vending-stand profits and buy an electric clock for the wall behind the stand. We felt that the clock would give the stand an air of prosperity.

January 1, 1952

I finished "Walls of Jericho," by Rudolph Fisher, today. I feel critical of its plot, its style. The author overdid everything. Perhaps it is necessary for writers to overdo things so that they may impress their readers and also so that they may write a long book. Most of modern literature seems disgustingly overwritten to me. Why can't people write like Dickens or Dumas?

I feel confident that I could write a book one day—not an ordinary book but a book that would reveal my deepest personal feelings and thoughts. I could write a book about my contact with the worst of human beings and the best of human beings. As it is, my thoughts and emotions are hidden in me without an outlet. I want to push them out into the world, let them be the property of the scraps of paper they would be written on. I would let the tragedy of the world be revealed through me. But the competition in the field of writing is great.

January 2

Practically all my morning was spent in Mr. Woolly's office completing the admissions form for Columbia University. As I sat in the office, millions of thoughts entered my head. I wished I were a child again so I could dress as I pleased, go barefoot, have fights, and have no restraints, no worries about tomorrow. I feel that I became mature at too early an age. I wish I had had a long childhood. If I am ever blessed with children, I will make sure they have very long childhoods.

I came to Little Rock when I was too young. My first days here were terrifying, and my whole first year was spent trying to win acceptance, to make my name and reputation. Somehow or other, I made Little Rock my second home. Now I may be going to Columbia, where I'll know nobody. I will have to readjust, this time to a sighted place, to a big city. I will have to establish a new home. I will have to make my name all over again. To build up a reputation takes ages and requires patience and suffering, but a reputation can be destroyed in a moment.

Sometimes I wish I had never left India, because now I must live mostly in memories, like a man with no real home in this uncertain world. I have never had better friends than my family. My heart is only with them. God knows how much longer now I will have to live without them. Yet when I was a child I longed to leave them—longed to be a grownup and to gain my position in the world.

We finished the Columbia admissions form except that I have to retype my autobiographical sketch. We must struggle to exist at all times and prepare for all kinds of sacrifices if we are to achieve our goal. That's life.

January 3

This is the worst day we've had for more than a month. It has been raining since morning. Weather like this does not help the feeling of the individual. I spent most of the day reading in bed.

I have not received any letter from home for a month and a half. Each

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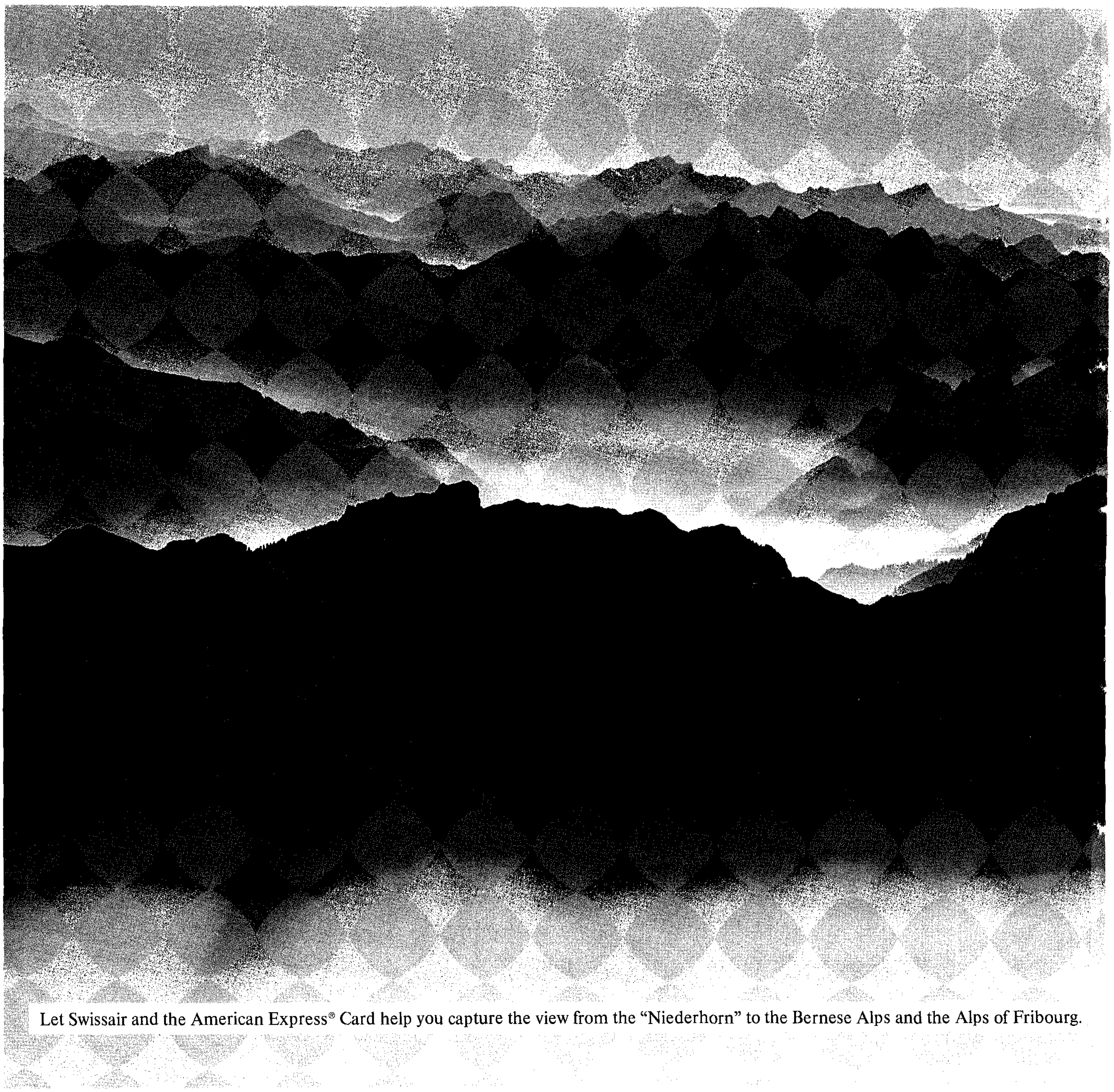

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day I think a letter will come, but there is nothing. I don't think the holidays are good for me. Perhaps I will spend all of tonight reading. What else can I turn to? I wish that I could sleep better and get a letter from home.

January 4

This morning, I went to see a Mr. Freeling, the insurance agent. I have no health insurance, and Columbia requires applicants to have some.

We had excellent meals today. But I had no appetite. This was sad, because only once in a blue moon do we get a good meal here. But I made myself eat for the sake of the people who prepared it. Oh, Mother, you simply spoiled us with good food! Has anybody ever thought what a person has to put up with when he leaves the shelter of his parents' roof?

January 5

I spent all morning washing my clothes and cleaning out my locker and broom closet in preparation for the reopening of school tomorrow. I also wrote a letter to Sister Pom. I am really worried about her pregnancy. She's already had a stillborn baby.

Mr. Chiles came back today and I told him about the five books I read this vacation—"Walls of Jericho," "Treasure Island," "Oliver Twist," "The Count of Monte Cristo," "Lone Star Ranger." I also told him that I had finished my correspondence course, so I would be graduating this year after all. He took great delight in the news. He has the ability to take genuine pleasure in other people's successes.

I'm going to listen to the news now, and then go to bed to sleep and dream. I can't ever go to sleep without listening to the news. I'm fascinated by it.

January 6

All the students are back. Once again, I had almost forgotten how noisy it is with everyone around. Students were very indignant and stunned to learn about Billy's and Evelyn's marriage. It was the subject of talk all day.

I spent some time talking with Mr. Chiles about the world situation and so on. The world is indeed in a great turmoil.

I helped carry a piano today.

I spent most of last night reading "Damon Runyon Omnibus." Damon Runyon was a genius. Critics say that the book is very true to life. It's the most interesting and revealing book about the underworld in and around the East.

It's eight-thirty, but I can't stay awake any longer. I have a hard and difficult day at school tomorrow.

January 9

We had a great piece of news today. Miss Harper's father is completely recovered.

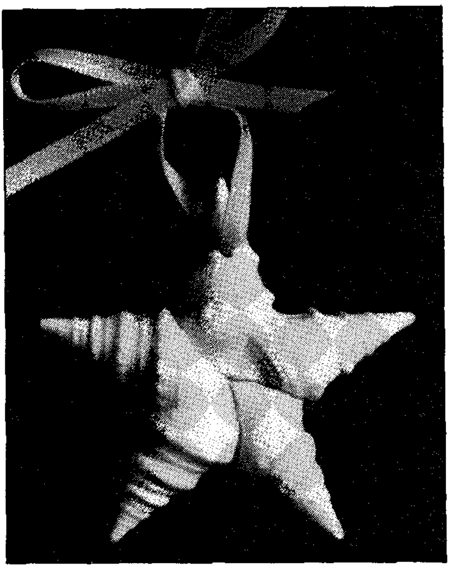
At two o'clock I had a visit from two ladies whom I didn't know. They wanted me to speak on Hinduism to their ladies' club on January 20th, with four other speakers from different religions of the world, including a Muslim. I didn't want to speak with a Muslim in the room, since a great part of my speech is generally about Partition and it would be undiplomatic to talk about that with him there. But the ladies wouldn't take no for an answer.

January 10

Today I got a terrible piece of news about Surinder. How could he have fallen in the blinding mist of physical desire. I have always wanted to marry an Indian girl who shared my background, my thoughts and feelings about home, who loved Indian music, Indian food, and the slow Indian way of thinking. I wouldn't want my children to be uncertain of their nationality, not know whether they're Indian or American, Hindu or Christian. Yet all along, Daddyjee has discouraged me from going back, because he says no matter what I do, my blindness will always be an obstacle to leading a full and rich life in India. Is he right? Will a nice Indian girl marry me? A blind person is often tense. He needs some feeling of security, someone to rely upon. But if Daddyjee is right, I may have to resort to an American girl whether I like it or not. Also, if I am going to become a writer I'll need someone to read to me from the world of books. I would need to marry an educated girl who could help me in my work. Oh, how I wish I were more experienced in these matters!

January 11

Today I received two letters from home. Most of my sorrow and sadness has had to do with being away from home—as a child, and now in Little Rock. When one's feelings of homesickness flare up, one loses one's good sense and starts living in a completely private world. Depression clouds the mind, and one can't share his feelings of depression with even his closest



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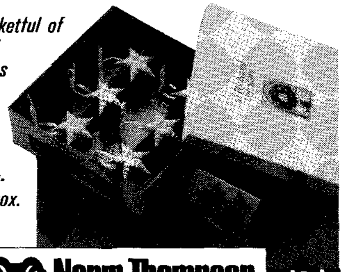

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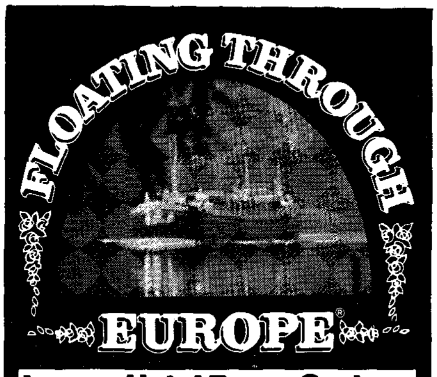

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friend, because then the mansion of friendship might go up in smoke. That's why I must suppress my feelings of depression with an iron hand, for friendship is not like parents' unconditional love for their child. It depends completely on putting up a cheerful front, especially if one is a foreigner. I therefore must learn to live with these feelings of depression that constantly invade me and keep them to myself. The best man is he who, when depressed, clenches his fists and bites his tongue and doesn't so much as let out a sound. In this way, the insanity can be controlled and made temporary. Still, I am afraid that these feelings will break out one of these days and I will destroy my reputation for being a good fellow. Oh, God, sometimes I feel so angry. What did they use to say at home—that there are five stages of temper? I feel I have them all at once. The best way to check temper is to turn it against oneself. But that only feeds depression.

January 12

I have just returned from the senior class party in the gymnasium. I took my tape recorder, and because of it we had some beautiful music to roller-skate to. Norman Penix and Carol Rowe [she was eighteen and a senior] wanted to skate, but nobody wanted to help them, *because they are not good* in mobility. So I took it upon myself to lead them around the floor on skates. They were really appreciative and showed their gratitude. I feel so satisfied when I can help someone. Perhaps because I know that I am going to need help in my life, I get great pleasure in doing things for others. Or maybe this is inherited. My parents are the same way.

As I sit at my desk and type these few lines, my body is tired but I feel good. I would feel better if there was someone who could have shared the joy of the party with me—someone who was dear to me.

January 13

It is Sunday morning. Everyone has gone to church and the school is quiet. I am sitting in my broom closet typing and listening to Saigal sing love songs on my tape recorder. Tears are welling up in my eyes—eyes that cannot see but can picture. I am still a child made up of very delicate material. Listening to Indian music makes me especially sad because it recalls so many memories of home—Sunday mornings sitting with Sister Nimi in the draw-

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ing room, a blazing fire hot on my face, or typing letters to schools late into the night, with a raga on the radio. The letters of rejection would come back from those schools up and down, right and left, saying that I shouldn't come out of India at such a young age because I would become maladjusted, not fit to live either in the East or the West. Perhaps those authorities were right, after all.

Today Daddyjee again presented in a letter "the real facts" of what my life would be like if I insisted on returning to India. He said that I would lose all the independence I've acquired in America, that I would never be able to go out on the street by myself. But I am ready to face anything to go home, my memories are so dear to me.

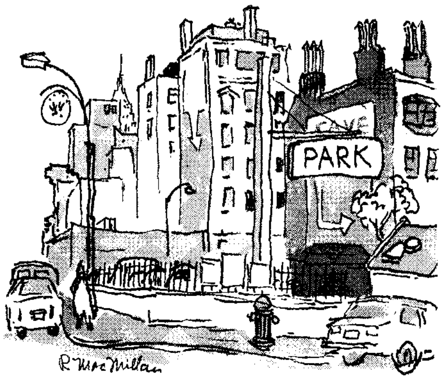
January 14

Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful Jollity. . . .
Hence vain deluding Joys,
The brood of Folly without father bred! . . .
Hail, divinest Melancholy!

As I listened to Miss Harper read "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" aloud in our literature class, I felt the urge to swallow these masterpieces whole. Oh, the admiration I feel for these poems and for good literature is beyond anyone's imagination. I have hunger for knowledge. I wish I were widely read. I wish I could read without bounds. Oh, God, I wish that I had eyesight, only so I could read. Reading on records is not the same as reading with eyes—you never know how anything is spelled or punctuated, and you can't study anything. Reading in Braille isn't the same, either—it's much slower than reading on records. One summer, I am going to do nothing but read.

January 18

Today I read a biography of General MacArthur in *Reader's Digest*. I had conflicting feelings about him. I think he would have gone down in



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history as a greater man if he had closed his career after his inspiring and fascinating speech to Congress. But then again, like him, I would perhaps have stayed on and sought more glory and more recognition. Anyway, it's clear from his background that he's not the kind of man to quit under heat. I admire him for his firmness.

What a great democracy America is.

January 19

Today, as I read the first few lines of "The Long, Long Trailer" in *Reader's Digest*, my heart became heavy, because they revived the memory of the dream Daddyjee had of getting a trailer and driving the whole family from India to the West. Did I ever believe that his dream would come true? Yes I did, because I wanted to believe. It doesn't take a minute for me to leave the real world and fall into dreaming, something I must have got from him.

Perhaps I will be able to realize Daddyjee's dream and go on a tour of the West in a trailer with my children. Oh, God, will you bless me with a family? Will I be able to pass what I have learned from Daddyjee to the next generation?

January 20

It was a day of glory that I will remember for the rest of my life. I gave a very good speech in front of a very big audience [at the ladies' club]. The people there were anything but poor. Yet they all seemed unhappy and desperate. It seems Americans have all the material things, but they lack the spiritual bread.

The people in the audience asked so many questions. One lady wanted to know why I didn't become a Christian. I told her that I sometimes worried about not being a Christian, but that I couldn't stop being a Hindu. I said that I looked forward to the day when people will unite under one religion and have an international government. Until then, we will have to live in terror and agony.

January 23

I spent nearly all evening taking the radio-phonograph combination out of its cabinet, which I am going to refinish. It was a lot of fun to fool around with the electrical equipment as I used to do at home. Oh, God, if I could see, I would study engineering and electronics. If I could see, I would own a

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car, a hunting dog, and a gun. But even if I could see, I wouldn't have the money. The best policy is not to want things that one doesn't have. I hope, though, that one day I can have a car and someone to drive it. This wish is childish but very strong.

January 24

Today we had a band engagement at a P.T.A. meeting at Wrightsell Primary School in Little Rock. We played such numbers as "Rhythm in My Nursery Rhymes," "An Apple for the Teacher," and "School Days."

When I got back to school, I went to Mr. Chiles's room and borrowed some beautiful classical records from him. As I type, I am listening to them and transferring them onto my own tapes. Oh, I wish I could own all the music in the world! I wish that music were eatable! My wishes are very silly and odd. They are the result of imagination, which makes up for my lack of eyesight.

The world is full of tension which makes people moody and pessimistic, but music provides us with a refuge. In fact, the world could not survive without it. Because of it, I can sit back in my chair, detach myself from the doings of the world, and penetrate my whole past.

For the last couple of weeks it has been awfully springlike. I have been spending as much time as I possibly can outside, admiring and enjoying the flowers. They've already started blossoming. But Arkansas has really startling reverses in weather, and everyone is predicting a bitter cold wave. That'll put an end to the flowers.

January 27

Today I ran the vending stand for three hours. Then for two hours I did office duty—answering the telephone and receiving no end of visitors to the school. I'm feeling very sleepy.

January 28

I am relaxing in my broom closet, listening to "Branded" on Lux Radio Theatre. Once, Mr. Chatterjee [an old friend of my father's, whom I'd visited in Ohio] remarked that he had met a writer who told him that if a person could not find a new short story every time he listened to the radio for five minutes, he would never become a writer.

January 30

It is about eight-thirty in the evening, and I have just returned from a

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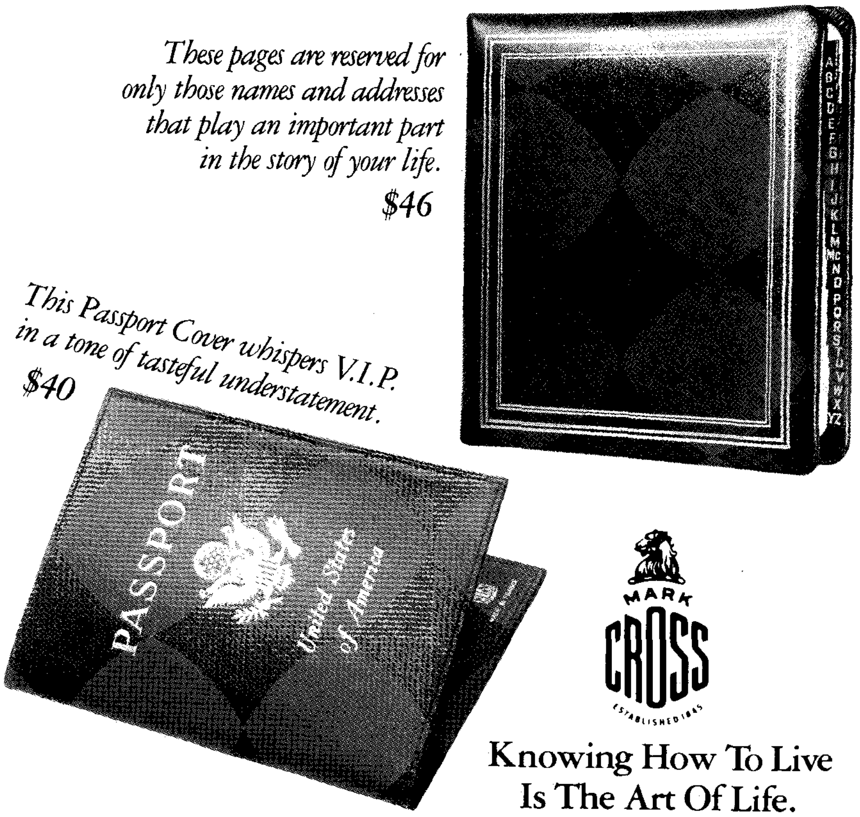

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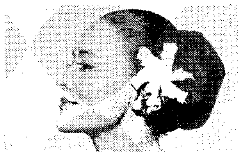

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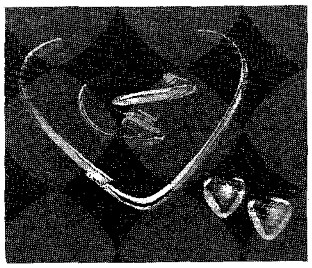

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session of the Student Senate. We discussed the planning of a party for the visiting wrestling teams from two other states ten days hence. It seems all the members of the visiting teams would want girls to entertain them. But the boys here who are going with girls won't let them be hostesses. They seem to think that these girls are their property. It's hard to entertain Americans, because all they want is girls. We spent forty-five minutes talking about it, but couldn't reach any conclusions.

January 31

I spoke today for two hours in Rosedale, which is about ten miles from Little Rock. I again had the impression that Americans, in spite of their great material wealth, are not happy. They boil within themselves like atom bombs. The Korean War is making them tenser.

February 1

Today I received a letter from Sister Nimi written after she got a job and took a room in Jamshedpur. She writes about loneliness in the steel town and about our lovely days in Simla. She's facing the same problems that I did when I came to Little Rock. Then, I wrote her a letter to relieve the pain I felt. Now, she's written to me to relieve her pain.

February 2

This has been the worst day of my time at school. George Conner and Mariann Phillips and James Spakes and Peggy Stevens were expelled for trying to run off to Benton and get married. I feel so guilty that I can't write anymore.

February 5

Today I received a letter from Daddyjee. He told me that Sister Pom had had a baby girl. It pleased me no end. Since she already has a son, she wanted a daughter. Now her family is balanced.

Daddyjee enclosed a telegram from the Watumull Foundation telling him that he had won a prize of six hundred dollars for his essay on India's population problem. It was indeed heartening to learn that he had made use of his gift for writing and been rewarded for it. He also enclosed a letter from Mr. Norman Cousins. [My father had got to know Norman Cousins, the editor of the *Saturday Review*, during Cousins' visit to India, and had been sharing with him some of my more descriptive letters home.] Mr. Cousins said that he thought my experiences in America could make a book. He said he was writing about me to a friend at Houghton Mifflin, which publishes books. Mr. Cousins' letter lifted my spirits. Ever since I arrived in the States, I have been thinking of writing a book about my experiences. Here at last is someone in the field who thinks I can.

Today Miss Harper tried to teach me more English grammar. I did not know any grammar before I came to America. I don't know how I ever did without it, but I did.

February 7

We had a pep rally for the wrestling team with a snake dance today. I had to make a speech to raise the spirits of the team and my fellow-students. Since I didn't know what to say, I was quite nervous, but the right words came to me spontaneously.

February 8

I read nearly all night, with the exception of a couple of hours which I spent lying in the arms of Morpheus.

February 9

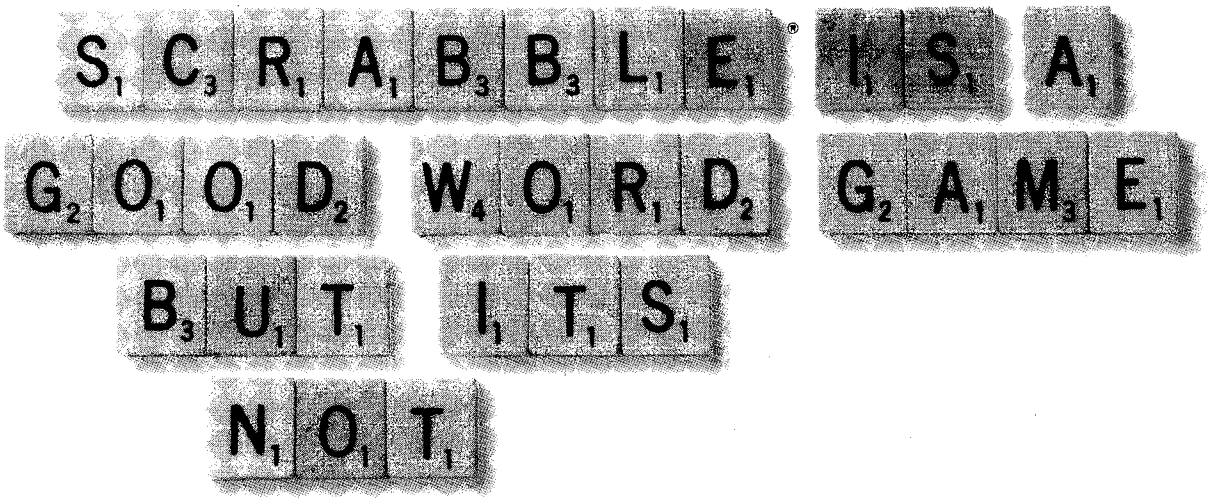
Oather, Bruton, McNabb, and I served as hosts for the visiting wrestling teams from the Oklahoma and Kentucky Schools for the Blind. I had to look after five wrestlers and make sure that they got to the dining room and got plenty to eat, got to the gymnasium and the dormitories. It was an honor for me.

All through the matches, I had to run a makeshift vending stand in the gymnasium. But I was able to work and watch and enjoy and yell all at the same time. I ruined my throat. Our school won first place in the meet by four points.

I simply fell in love with the five boys I was looking after, especially Evans. He was sixteen, in the eleventh grade, and quite childlike. I got very attached to him. Now he has left, and I probably will never see him again. I hated to see him go—to make a friend in a day and then to lose him. We didn't even decide to write to each other.

February 10

The most eventful part of the day was a few minutes ago, at eight-thirty. I turned on the radio to see what was on and heard the announcer say that we would not hear "The Sixty-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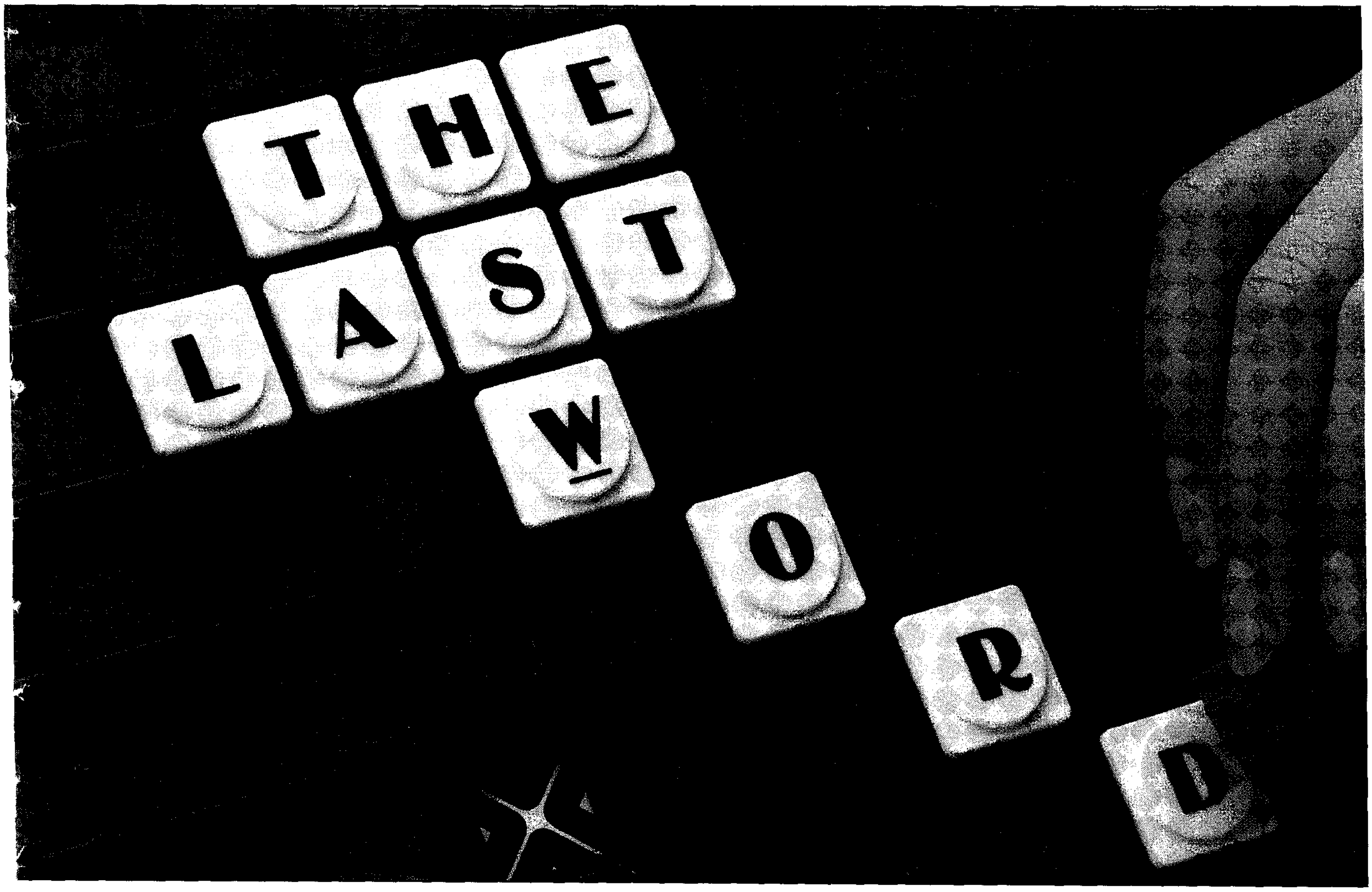
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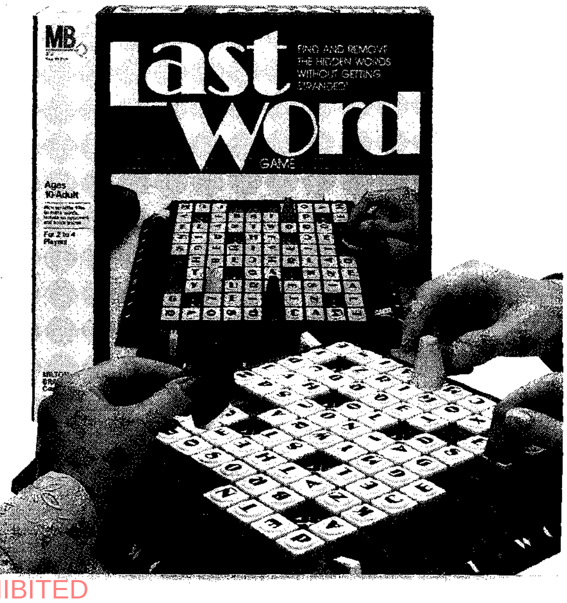
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Four-Dollar Question" today because of a special broadcast. The special broadcast was someone named Chambers reading a letter to his children. The letter is the foreword to his book, called "Witness," which will be published in June. The letter dealt with the Hiss case. It was a most heartbreaking letter. I have a great hunger to find out more about this case.

February 11

Today was a great day for me. Thanks to Mr. Cousins, I received a letter from the Houghton Mifflin publishing house in Boston. They want me to submit some of my works on completion. My thrills cannot be imagined. I'm a long way from a book, but this could be my great chance.

February 12

Our calendar is usually crowded with paid engagements at this time of the year, but our first band engagement in 1952 was gratis. It was at the state mental hospital, for their Valentine's Day dance. We had to accept this engagement for Tuesday—the most strenuous day of the week for many of us in the band.

We had to carry our instruments, our amplifier, and the speaker to the school bus, in the pouring rain. At the hospital, when we started tuning up, we discovered that the piano, a beat-up old thing hardly worth the name, was half a pitch lower than our instruments. The band had had the same problem with the same piano last year, and the lady in charge of social life at the hospital had promised Mr. Woolly over the telephone that the piano was now in perfect tune. The lady now offered no excuses, but told Mr. Woolly that we should go ahead and play, since mental patients couldn't tell the difference anyway. She said that they just wanted to march around to the music and get some much-needed exercise.

Mr. Woolly lost his patience and Mr. Sykes absolutely refused to play the piano. [Mr. Raymond Sykes was the senior music teacher at the school, and the bandleader.]

Mr. Woolly called the school and arranged for the school bus to bring over one of the spinets from a practice room. We had heard of pianos being trucked in for great pianists, like Rubinstein, but we were just a small state-school band. We were both flattered and disgusted.

The patients became restive. They started shouting that they wanted to dance, and some of them started marching around, calling "Band! Band!" They wouldn't stop till Mr. Sykes played them a Chopin grand march. He beat it out on the out-of-tune old thing as if he were whipping a dead mule. The patients really loved it.

The engagement was to begin at seven. At eight, we were still sitting on the stage, laughing. At nine o'clock a spinet arrived from the school, and we finally settled down to play. Then Mr. Sykes discovered that the pedal had been broken during the spinet's trip to the hospital. He got down on the floor and tried to fix it, but gave it up as a hopeless job. As he stood up, he caught the seat of his trousers on a nail on the hospital bench and tore a good six-inch-long hole in them. The pity was, he had put on a brand-new tan suit for the occasion. If I had been him, I would have packed up and gone home, but he just tried to laugh it off. I marvelled at his good humor.

We got down to playing, and played for about three hours. We played "The Cradle Song," "The Doll Dance," "After You've Gone," "Mighty Lak' a Rose." The patients really pounded their feet and clapped with excitement when we played "The Doll Dance."

During the intermission, I danced with Lois to Mr. Sykes's piano playing. I complimented her on her clarinet playing. She was really pleased. I think I like her very much.

We had to carry the instruments back to the bus in the rain. What a day!

February 13

This evening I went to the Robinson Auditorium to listen to the two world-famous pianists Babin and Vronsky. They were great. How I envied them! I wish I had had proper training from my childhood to be a great musician.

February 14

Today has been a day of fatigue and disgust. I learned that there are some people who will never admit a mistake, who will never retract what they have said, even when they know that they're in the wrong. Such is their vanity. Mr. Robinson is one of these people. He's a fine man, but he has this fault, which sticks out like a sharpened pencil point. In three years we have had three principals, and each one has been a real winner.

February 15

This morning we had to get up at six o'clock and get dressed, because we had a band engagement at the Capital Club.

Mr. Woolly told some of us at the vending stand that he'd had a letter from the superintendent of the Mississippi School for the Blind, suggesting that we expand our annual competition in wrestling to include other activities and subjects. He thought that we would all benefit from getting to know another school in this way.

Miss Howard [the kindergarten teacher] asked me to come along with her to the Moses Melody Shop to advise her on buying a tape recorder. Usually we have band practice on Friday afternoon, but some of us had got Mr. Sykes to cancel it this week so that we could listen to the funeral broadcast of George VI. I set my special clock to turn on my radio and tape recorder to record the broadcast, and went with Miss Howard to the shop and helped her out.

February 17

Most of the day I spent thinking about home. Depression so often gets the better of me, but what keeps me going is the feeling that my family is behind me.

A little while ago, I heard an announcement on the radio that today is the silver jubilee of the City Service Band of America, and they were having a jubilee musical program. As I type this, I'm listening to the wonderful music of the band and recording it. The radio and the tape recorder have become my private companions, my American family that no one knows about.

February 19

As I sit at my typewriter with seven minutes to lunch, I am in a boiling temper. I was so eager to study journalism that when Miss Harper began to teach us the subject yesterday in English class, I could have blessed her. But today, without giving us any time to learn, she gave us a test. I made seventy-six, the lowest score I've ever made. As if the test wasn't bad enough, she gave us an assignment to hunt up six interesting leads in newspapers. This is a hard task for us, since we don't have any sighted readers here to work with.

Now I've just returned from lunch. Eating cooled me down some. I make

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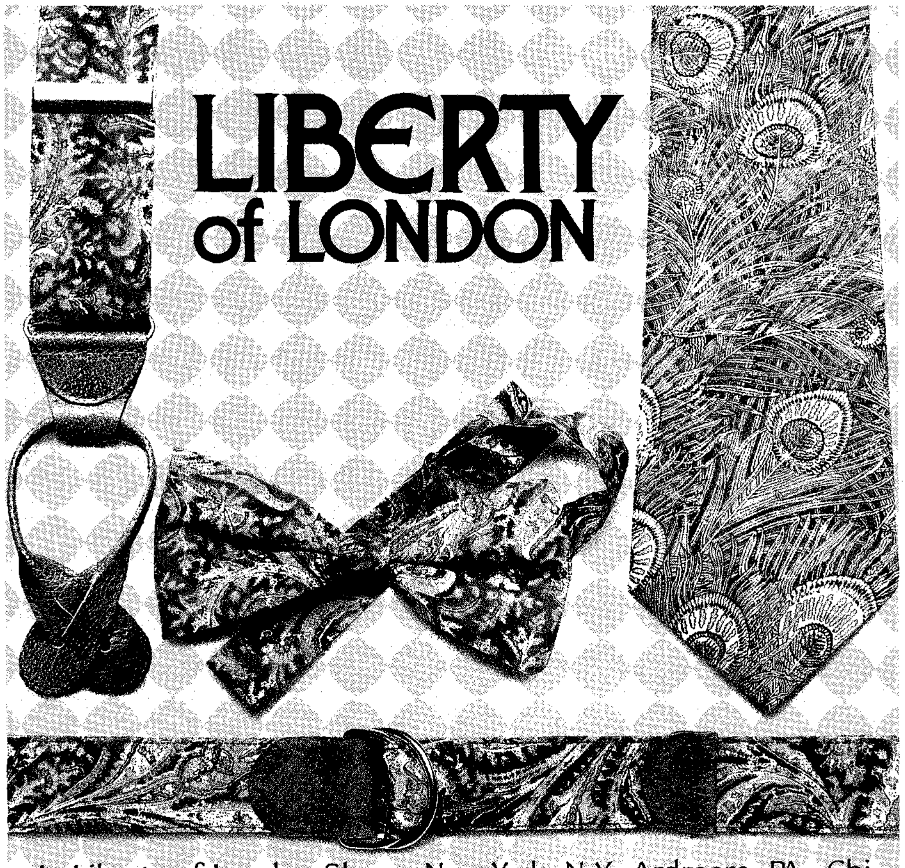

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a habit of being good-tempered and jovial at meals. That's good for one's digestion. I decided that I was worked up about a little happening, when in truth what I really care about are the big political problems of the world. But I suppose that I must educate myself by analyzing little happenings before I can understand big issues.

February 20

Mr. Hartman said at the square-dance club that he didn't believe in giving to charity. I became prejudiced against him right away. When I stop to reason, I can see his point of view—that he wants everyone to work for a living—but I reacted against him. I must learn to rise above my prejudices.

February 21

I have only thirteen weeks to go to graduation. I have to learn my long part for the senior play, rehearse, and perform in it. And that is just one of a hundred things.

February 22

This morning, the band went to Mabelvale High School. As usual, the students seemed to enjoy our music. Coming back, I found the last seat in the school bus and sat by myself. I felt very homesick. My heart cried for the old memories and wanted to be back in India. I don't know why, but I felt more lonely than I think I ever have before.

February 23

It's late in the evening. I am feeling rotten. I did not sleep last night. I am suffering from a terrible case of the flu.

February 25

We once had a dormitory supervisor, a Mr. Clay. He was chronologically old, but youthful in spirit. He woke us up every morning at six-thirty, saying things like "Come on, gentlemen, curry that mule," "Tickle that tiger—don't let him get away." He came to each bed and woke us up individually—shaking, pulling, or rolling us. Some boys didn't get up till five to seven, but they made it to breakfast by seven, because they knew that Mr. Clay had the power to confine us to the school building for two weeks.

Mr. Clay was heavyset, not over five and a half feet tall, and had a confident air. All the partially sighted boys commented on how blue his eyes were. He said he was learned in history, geography, and philosophy, and he took great pleasure in telling stories about Cleopatra. Unlike most men, he knew how to handle the eternally troublemaking and changing woman. Yet as far as anyone knew, he was a bachelor. He flirted with Miss Harper, Miss Wilson [Dorothy Wilson was the typing and girls' physical-education teacher], and the girl students, and they all took delight in his cute and cunning ways. He was famous for patting every young woman teacher before leaving the faculty dining room. His favorite food was white bread with sugar on it.

February 26

I wrote my last journal entry for Miss Harper's journalism class. Miss Harper admitted that everything I said about Mr. Clay was true, but she said that I hadn't considered how students' parents would feel when they read the assignment. [All the assignments were to be printed in the *Arkansas Braille News*.] I argued, but she insisted that I had to consider how the parents would feel when they came to know that such a man worked as a supervisor at the school. She cut out all the references to girls and women teachers and made Mr. Clay sound like a very ordinary, pleasant man. So I learned today that it's not at all diplomatic to tell the truth.

February 27

This is the first year that our school has had a French class, and during it, we are learning to read very elementary French, memorizing everyday phrases and common nouns, competing in spelling games, and playing cards in French. In the class, you may see our faces redden as we tackle grammar tests, or a faraway look come into our eyes as we dream of being in Paris and visiting the beautiful, historic places we read about. Learning this language has broadened our outlook on world affairs. Perhaps the time will come when we, the students of French, can play our part in solving the world's crises, because of our better understanding of our Western neighbor. Our school is playing its little part to avoid world destruction.

March 1

Today we had contests in Braille reading, sight-saving reading, spelling, music, voice, piano, clarinet, mental math, chess, and track and field events all day. All grades competed. The idea was to select our team to go

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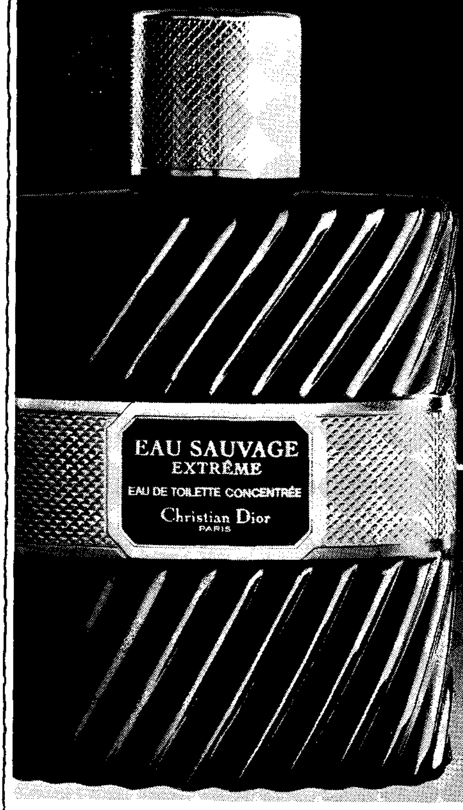

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to the Mississippi School for the Blind in Jackson. Then we went and had supper, and came back to the auditorium. Mr. Woolly announced the names of the lucky winners. I wasn't successful in any contest.

March 3

As so often, I have been wondering what I wish to become, what profession I should seek. I am sure I can't succeed in music. I didn't start studying Western music when I was very small, so I have no foundation in it. My model, Mr. Chiles, was playing classical piano music when he was in ninth grade, and he didn't succeed in making a career of music. I like the thought of law. I believe I have the power to think logically. I love oratory. Law is imperative for going into politics, and I would like to become one of the greatest statesmen. But the practice of law requires memory, and I have a very poor memory. Then there is writing. I love to read and write. I love good literature. I love to criticize books. I have the imagination and possess the talent to write, I think. I would also like my views to be known widely—all over the world. I think I could succeed in this profession, in spite of the great competition. But my foundation in the English language and everything else is so poor.

I must discuss my future with my father.

March 4

I just had my report card read to me. I was thrilled. I have made the honor roll again. This means that I have been on the honor roll the entire school year. Mr. Robinson, however, continues to give me B's in geometry. I don't understand. I work awfully hard in his class, but I must be at fault. I wish I knew what my fault was so that I could correct it.

March 5

Mr. Woolly just handed us our class rings in front of the whole junior-senior high school in the auditorium. I sat there, anxious to hear who our class valedictorian and salutatorian would be. Many a time in the past months I have wondered if I would be one of the two speakers. I have done well in the last two years, except for math. But my grades in ninth grade were simply awful. That was my first year in this country. Besides, I have had to carry heavier loads so that I could finish high school in three years rather than four. Then Mr. Woolly announced that Oather Brown would be the valedictorian and I would be the salutatorian. I couldn't contain my excitement. I am extremely ambitious. I can't help it.

Mr. Woolly then announced that he had an honest-to-God writer in the auditorium and that her name was Charlie May Simon. She was widely known as a writer of books for children and was married to Arkansas's greatest poet, John Gould Fletcher.

I listened, sitting on the edge of my chair, as Miss Simon said that what a writer needed most was experience—that when she was writing a book, she sought out experience. For one book, she went to live in a houseboat on the White River with three children. She and the children would go out on the river in a small motorboat every day for the experience of watching the fishermen fish.

March 6

I sit at this typewriter in my broom closet and I imagine that I am writing a letter to all those who would like to know the reactions of one student who is going to graduate from high school within three months. The pleasure of wearing a class ring for the whole day and feeling like a senior is beyond description.

March 7

I am alarmed at the world situation. Is there going to be a stable French government? Is General de Gaulle going to become the military dictator of France? Is the United States going to continue giving foreign aid to the poor countries of the world, or is the Senate going to let politics and public relations interfere with their responsibility, and cut foreign aid? Is there going to be a United European Army? Will the Korean armistice talks result in anything? Is Eisenhower, my favorite man for President, going to be nominated and elected? And is there going to be a Third World War? All these questions are rushing around in my mind. The answers I come up with are all grim. But I suppose the show will go on.

March 8

There were two additional contests for the Jackson, Mississippi, trip, in typing and essay writing. I took part in both and won in typing. Hallelujah!

The more I go to school parties, the more I realize that social functions help lift people's morale. But a person at a social function should not try to attract attention or be jovial at the expense of his integrity. One iota of integrity is more precious than all the king's men or all their horses.

March 12

We all got cold shots this morning. Cold shots have never helped me. But one can't be particular when one is away from home.

March 17

We are reading the works of Shakespeare in both my eleventh- and twelfth-grade English classes. His plays are simply out of this world. They are so beautiful and so philosophical. Oh, my yearning is simply to become like this great man. I know that's impossible. But if one aims one's arrow at the sky, it will at least get to the top of the trees.

March 18

Evelyn Worrell made a remark today that really got to me. We were discussing a geometry problem in the classroom before Mr. Robinson arrived when Evelyn said that she didn't want to hear what a "darky" had to say. I don't generally lose my temper—Daddyjee gave me strict training in controlling it—but today I did. I have been called a Negro before and been mistaken for a Negro once, and it didn't bother me, but I was enraged because Evelyn dismissed my opinion on the grounds that my skin is darker than hers. Evelyn is a junior. She has this attitude, after all the education she has received! More than ever I am determined to write a book one day and discuss this attitude that many Southern people seem to have.

March 19

I have only eight weeks left till graduation. Oh, how thrilling it will be to leave this school behind!

March 20

The weather outside is simply lovely. I love early spring days. Nature enthralls me. It reminds me that there is some supernatural being who created all these beautiful things.

March 21

It's my birthday. It was just like any other day except that I received letters from home wishing me many happy returns. Mother asked me in her letter, "What are you planning to do for your birthday?" The answer, of course, is "Study."

March 27

We got back tonight from Jackson, Mississippi, tired but happy. I lost the

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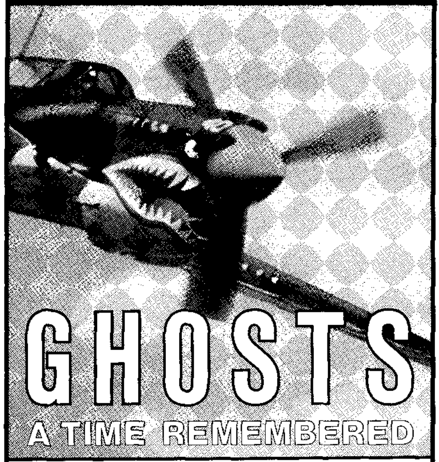

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typing contest to Viva Lou McCravy. If I had to lose to someone, I'm glad it was Viva Lou. Her voice was as sweet and original as her name. I'll write more about the adventures of us Arkansas travellers in Mississippi, but now my head is nodding over my typewriter and I must go to bed. Good night, Viva Lou, good night.

OUTSIDE THE GATE

Hail to thee, O A.S.B.,
  Our heads bow down before you;
Great numbers shall thy glory see,
  For those you've known adore you.

Though we attain life's highest goal,
  As one we all agree:
We'll be, as in the days of old,
  Thy students, A.S.B.

—*The alma mater of the Arkansas School for the Blind.*

MR. CHILES occasionally held occupational-guidance classes, as part of the social-adjustment program. He would invite guest speakers from organizations like Arkansas Enterprises for the Blind, the Vending Stand Program, and the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, and they would tell us about what a blind high-school graduate could do in the world outside—how he could become a piano tuner or a vending-stand operator or a Dictaphone typist. As a matter of course, I was required to attend these classes, although I had long since decided that I would go to college, like my older brother and older sisters and Mr. Chiles himself. Moreover, unlike the few graduates of the school who had gone to college, I wanted to go to a world-famous university—assuming, for some reason, that I had only to decide which university I wanted to go to and I would be able to go there. Mr. Woolly and the faculty shared this rosy assumption. As they saw it, ours was one of the best schools of the kind in the country and I was one of its star pupils. Also, I was a much written-about personality in Little Rock. They thought that any university would be proud to have me.

Daddyji suggested that I go to Harvard, Yale, or Princeton, which he called "the triple towers of American university education." But I ruled out Yale and Princeton because I somehow got the impression that the one was a nest of lawyers and the other a second-class Oxford. I settled on Harvard, and told Mr. Woolly that that was where I would be going.

"Then I'd better write and let them know," he said.

One day in March, 1951, Mr. Woolly called me to his office and read me the reply he had received from Richard M. Gummere, the chairman of the Committee on Admissions at Harvard:

> DEAR MR. WOOLLY:
> In the case of a young man who is blind, it is our regular custom here in the Admission Office to refer all the details of the case for study to our Hygiene Department. We have found that on account of differing degrees of blindness, the problems of getting around from one hall to another in a city, and the matter of dormitories and other such things, it calls for very intensive study ahead of time. We feel that the case of a boy who cannot afford to have someone pretty close to him as a guide a good deal of the time makes it more difficult for the blind boy to get along here with the conditions mentioned above. If you could enlighten us a little further on the degree of blindness and any other such details about the young man, I will be very glad to give the matter my attention.
> I repeat that we are very glad to discuss the matter with you since we want to help boys who are able to deal with this handicap in our College, but we have very few because we are not like a small college campus where everything is nearby and within a certain circle and very accessible.

Mr. Gummere's letter depressed and puzzled both Mr. Woolly and me; Mr. Gummere seemed to have no idea that there were totally blind people who could get around by themselves—as Oather and I did, for instance. Yet Harvard was on the doorstep of Perkins, an institution for the blind without an equal in America.

"Boy, you can get around Little Rock and North Little Rock and you've travelled outside the state by yourself—Harvard isn't going to present you with any problem," Mr. Woolly said. "But maybe you should go to Hendrix, after all. People there know the capabilities of our blind youngsters. After all, Mr. Chiles went there."

But I had set my heart on getting the best education I could. Anyway, the more I thought about Mr. Gummere's letter, the more I came to think of it as a challenge to me to educate the Harvard authorities on our "capabilities," and I now said as much to Mr. Woolly.

"Well, then, we'll keep at Harvard," Mr. Woolly said. "I'm sure that's what your dad wants for you."

In due course, he wrote to Mr. Gummere, saying this about me, in part:

> He has no vision, having lost it at the age of four. However, he travels very well, having made the trip from New Delhi

without an aide. Also, he has traveled a good deal over the U.S.A. In fact, he travels as well as any blind person I know.

In order to buttress my credentials, Mr. Woolly gave Mr. Gummere a list of all the courses I had taken and would be taking before I graduated, and told him that if he thought I needed additional courses for Harvard I was prepared to take them through the Hadley Correspondence School for the Blind, in Winnetka, Illinois.

In the meantime, at Mr. Gummere's suggestion I got in touch with Mr. A. Howard Stebbins, Jr., an alumnus of Harvard who lived in Little Rock and often interviewed candidates for admission to the university. Mr. Gummere had said that the admissions committee set great store by his evaluation. I remember that I telephoned him for an appointment, got dressed in my dress trousers and my only jacket—a sort of nylon windbreaker—and went alone to see him. I thought that if I walked into his house without a cane, and without stumbling and bumping into things, he would at least be able to tell the Harvard admissions committee that I got around without any difficulty. I remember walking through his door, shaking his hand, and finding a chair unassisted, but the rest of the interview is a complete blank. It is one of the few episodes in my life over which memory has pulled down an impenetrable blind.

IN addition to calling on Mr. Stebbins, I asked for a letter of recommendation from Lieutenant Colonel Dr. George M. Leiby, a surgeon serving at Moody Air Force Base, in Georgia. Dr. Leiby had met Daddyji during a visit to India in connection with the Indian government's attempts to control venereal disease; subsequently, he had spent a few hours with me in Little Rock on his way to a medical conference in Hot Springs. He was the most important person I knew in the country and was just the kind of man I was sure had gone to Harvard, although I was too shy to quiz him about it. (Actually, he hadn't.) He sent me a copy of a letter he had written to Harvard on June 21st:

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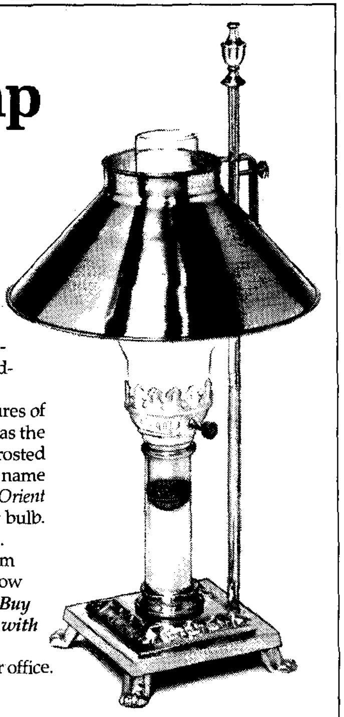

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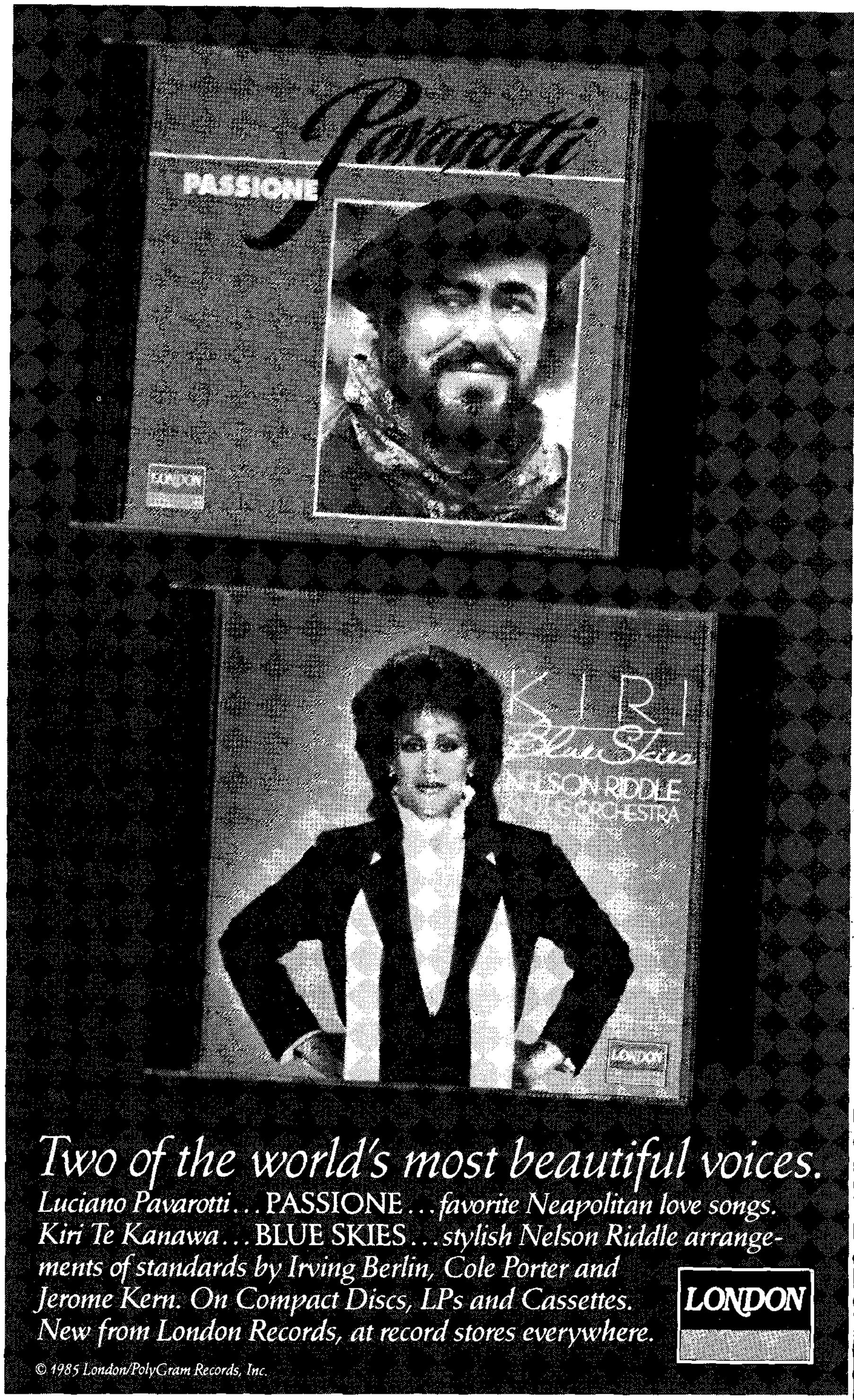
> depend upon such physical aids as canes and Seeing-Eye dogs. . . .
>
> One is impressed with the excellent scholarship record Ved has accomplished at school. In addition to his activities as a student, he has organized a student government, of which he is president. . . . Ved has a fine personality, a high moral character, excellent judgment, and is exceedingly tolerant in his thinking. It is indeed a privilege to be able to recommend Ved Mehta to the Committee of Admissions for consideration to be accepted as a student at Harvard University.

I didn't like reading about myself, and I remember wanting to correct certain impressions that Dr. Leiby's letter gave, such as that I had organized our student government. But I naïvely thought that the letter alone might swing the authorities at Harvard in my favor. Dr. Leiby got only a polite response from Harvard, however. Undeterred, I went to the lengths of filing a complicated application. Although I did not get a formal rejection letter from the university, in the end I was forced to conclude that the Harvard admissions committee was like the Great Wall of China, and there was no way I could scale it.

LIKE all officials of the Indian government, Daddyji had faced mandatory retirement at age fifty-five. (He was a deputy director general of health services.) Although he had been given a year's extension—something that the government granted to officials it regarded as "indispensable"—by the summer of 1951 he was out of a job. Since he and the family had to leave his government accommodations, they moved in temporarily with some relatives, and Daddyji converted most of his modest government pension into ready cash, so that he could use the money to build a little house for the family. He had already bought a little plot of land in a refugee colony in New Delhi, with money that the government had paid him in compensation for our house lost to Pakistan. (All refugees who had lost property in the Partition were given ten per cent of its value by the government.) Daddyji's total resources at his retirement were barely eighty thousand rupees, or sixteen thousand dollars, and in addition to having to build a house, as Sister Pom wrote to me, he still had to support four dependent children: my brother Om, who was twenty and had just started a four-year marine-engineering course; my sister Usha, who was fourteen; my brother Ashok, who was seven; and, of course, me. Sister Nimi, who was twenty-three and had



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just got a job, was technically self-supporting, but, as Sister Pom pointed out, Daddyji would have the expense of providing a dowry and putting on a wedding for her one day. As it was, after his losses in the Partition he had already had to marry off Sister Umi.

Almost from the day I reached America, Daddyji had had the idea that, like other students in the West, I could perhaps "learn and earn." "In the West, there is no stigma attached to work," he had said. "Unlike us, people there attach a dignity to labor." We couldn't think of any work I could do, however, so he had come up with the idea of our carrying on a little trade in Indian hand-carved ivory pieces, imagining that there would be a great demand for them in Machine Age America. The plan was that he would buy the "curios," as he called them, in the local bazaars for a few rupees and I would sell them for thirty or forty times that in Arkansas. Neither of us stopped to ask how he could hope to buy enough curios from the shelves of local bazaars, how he would get them to me, what customs would say about them, or how much money we could really hope to net. Neither of us had any notion of how things were supplied and marketed. Anyway, practical questions seldom intruded on our dreams.

When I came to America, I brought along a dozen ivory curios in order to test the waters, but they were stolen from my bag en route. Daddyji replaced them with three sets of ivory "no-evil" monkeys, four elephants, an oxcart, and a few other such pieces, sending them over with an American friend. For nearly two years now, I had been trying to find some way of selling them. Once, I went with Mr. Woolly to a flower-and-gift shop, and we showed them to its owner. He admired them but turned them down as "too exotic." So they were redeposited in the school's safe, and remained there, in their cotton-wool and Indian-newspaper wrappings. I took them out only a couple of times, when I wanted to choose a piece to give someone as a special present. Now and again, I would mention them to Mr. Woolly, but he seemed embarrassed by the whole subject, possibly because he didn't know any more about business than Daddyji and I did.

Now that Daddyji was retired, however, the need to "learn and earn" seemed urgent. One Saturday when Mr. Woolly had gone to Florida for some meetings, I got Mrs. Hankins to

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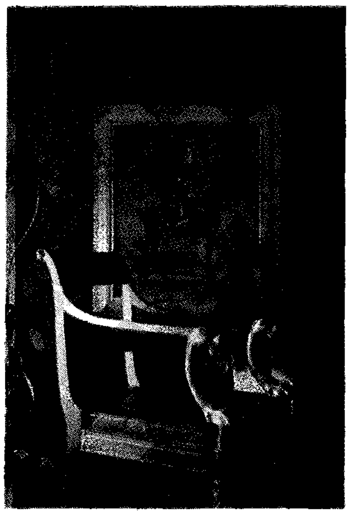

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take the curios out of the safe. I put them in a paper bag and set off for the trolley and downtown.

I went to Pfeifer's, a local department store, and talked my way into the office of the manager, a Mr. Strouse. I tried to get him to look at the ivory curios, but he showed me the door, saying grandly, "Pfeifer's does not buy goods from customers."

Then I went along to M. M. Cohn's, the other department store. I had no more luck there; the assistant manager said that the demand in America was all for glass knickknacks.

I gave up hope, but one day not long afterward Joe Red, the director of the Boys' Club in North Little Rock, and his wife, Jean, took me to a restaurant on the highway to Hot Springs. As I was telling them about my experiences at Pfeifer's and M. M. Cohn's, Jean said she had noticed a sign for a gift shop attached to the restaurant, and suggested that I try my salesmanship there. "This is a nationally famous restaurant," she said. "A lot of tourists stop here on their way to Hot Springs."

Jean accompanied me to the gift shop, and I spoke to its owner-manager, Mrs. Adkins. "I have some very special handmade ivory pieces from India," I said, talking as I imagined good salesmen did. "I have a curio with a wooden base and three good-sized monkeys sitting on it. One has his fingers in his ears, the second has his finger pressed to his lips, the third has his hands over his eyes. I have a stock of three of them."

"It sounds a little delicate," she said. "We get a lot of handling here—and by children, too."

"The curios are not at all delicate," I said, telling a diplomatic lie.

Mrs. Adkins finally agreed to look the curios over.

The next day, the Reds drove me out to the gift shop with the curios. Mrs. Adkins cooed over the trunks of the elephants, the hands of the "no-evil" monkeys, the filigree work on the oxcart. She promised to give them a splendid display and sell them at her usual commission, of forty per cent.

"What price will you charge for them?" I asked, trying to contain my excitement.

She thought a moment, and marked the oxcart at twelve dollars, the monkeys at nine dollars each, the elephants at five dollars each.

I calculated that Daddyji and I would net more than thirty dollars, but the pieces sat in her shop for several months and she didn't manage to sell one. In the meantime, my concern about how I would stay on in America—how Daddyji would pay for my college education—mounted with each passing day. Whenever I wrote to him and asked about this, his reply invariably was that my education was his responsibility, that I shouldn't worry, that something would turn up. But his vague optimism only increased my anxiety.

EVEN before I began to lose heart about Harvard, I had turned my energies to getting admitted to Columbia—mostly at the urging of Daddyji, who, on second thought, preferred it to Harvard, Yale, or Princeton, on the ground that New York was the commercial center of the country and so the best place to make contacts for my future. I wrote to Columbia and received a fifteen-page application form. It took some time to complete it, because I had to write a longish autobiographical sketch and get five letters of recommendation. Almost before I had recovered from that, I received a ten-page financial-aid form, followed by another form for foreign students. To strengthen my application, Daddyji appealed to Professor M. S. Sundaram, first secretary in the Indian Embassy's Education Department. He was sympathetic, saying that the Indian government would like to help me, since I was the only blind Indian student in America, and he undertook to write to an acquaintance, Mr. Lawrence H. Chamberlain, who worked in the admissions office at Columbia. Daddyji also got Norman Cousins, who had attended Columbia Teachers College, to write a letter of recommendation for me.

The Columbia application process took several months. Finally, Mr. Woolly, who had entered into correspondence with the university, received a letter dated February 21, 1952, from Mr. Bernard P. Ireland, assistant director of the Office of University Admissions, which read, in part, "You will understand, too, I feel sure, that Mr. Mehta's handicap raises a serious question about whether we shall be able to serve him here. However, we do occasionally admit a blind boy if the total evidence indicates that he is very strongly qualified to cope with the kind of program we offer." As part of that "total evidence," Mr. Ireland said, I would be required to take the College Board tests, which consisted of the Scholastic Aptitude

Test and Achievement Tests in English Composition and two electives. He directed us to get in touch with the Educational Testing Service, in Princeton, to make the necessary arrangements.

I immediately wrote off to the Testing Service, and received this reply:

EDUCATIONAL TESTING SERVICE
20 NASSAU STREET
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY
February 27, 1952

Mr. Ved Mehta
Arkansas School for the Blind
2600 W. Markham—Box 668
Little Rock, Arkansas

DEAR MR. MEHTA:

In reply to your recent letter I am enclosing blank form of application and Bulletin of Information for the March 15 College Board tests. . . .

I should perhaps add that it is unusual for blind students to offer College Board tests [for university admission], since these are timed examinations and no extra time is allowed. In the mathematical section of the Scholastic Aptitude Test diagrams and graphs are included.

We have prepared a Braille edition of the Scholastic Aptitude Test as well as a Clear Type edition (for partially blind students), which we should be glad to have your school administer to you. . . . None of the achievement tests of the Board are in Braille.

Sincerely yours,
Justine N. Taylor
(Mrs. William V. Taylor)
Executive Secretary to the Director
of Test Administration

The Testing Service authorities later decided to administer the tests to me at Little Rock Senior High School on March 15th, when forty sighted students were scheduled to take them there. Some special provisions were made for me, however, which Mrs. Taylor set out for Mr. Woolly in these terms:

> We are asking our supervisor in charge of the tests at the Senior High School, Little Rock, to appoint a proctor to administer the tests to Mr. Mehta. It will be the responsibility of [your] school to supply the amanuenses. No additional time will be allowed but the candidate may use a typewriter if he plans to offer the English Composition test.

ON the morning of the appointed day, when I arrived at the high school with Miss Harper, who was to serve as my amanuensis, I was full of trepidation but also of self-assurance. The prospect of taking the day-long College Board tests was alarming; still, it never crossed my mind that I would do badly, since I felt confident that I was as good as the sighted students trooping in for the tests.

The proctor gave Miss Harper an envelope and led us into a little side

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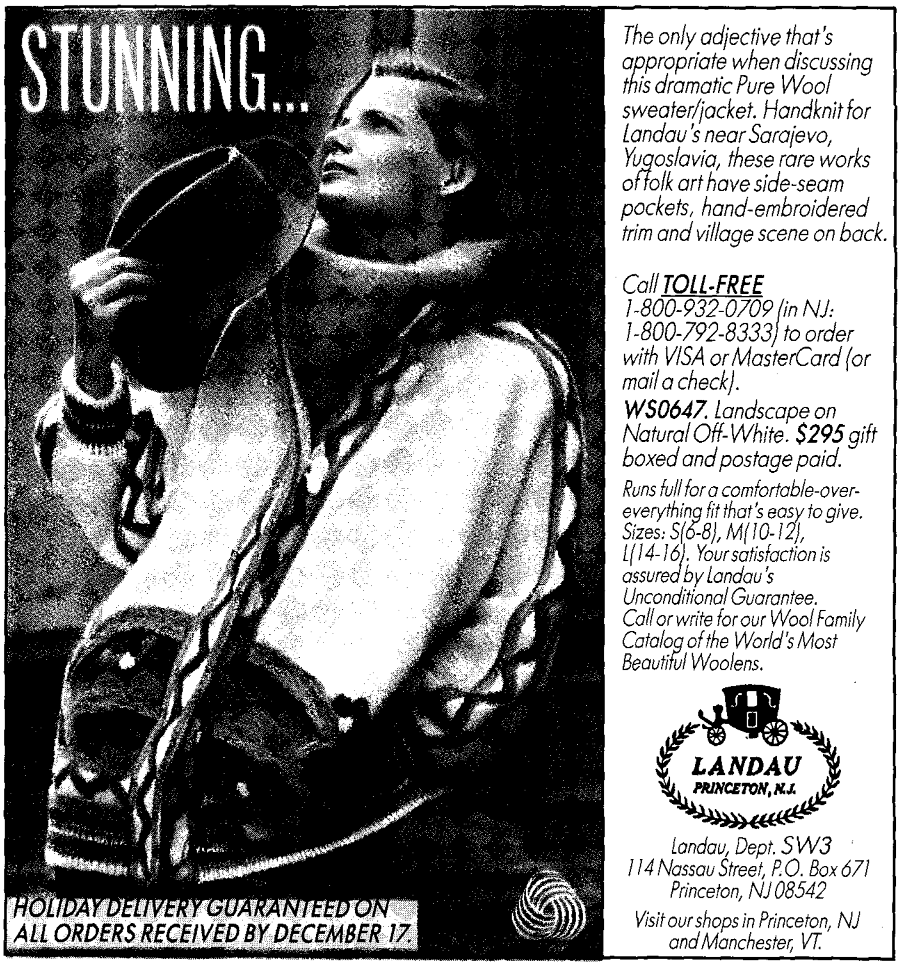
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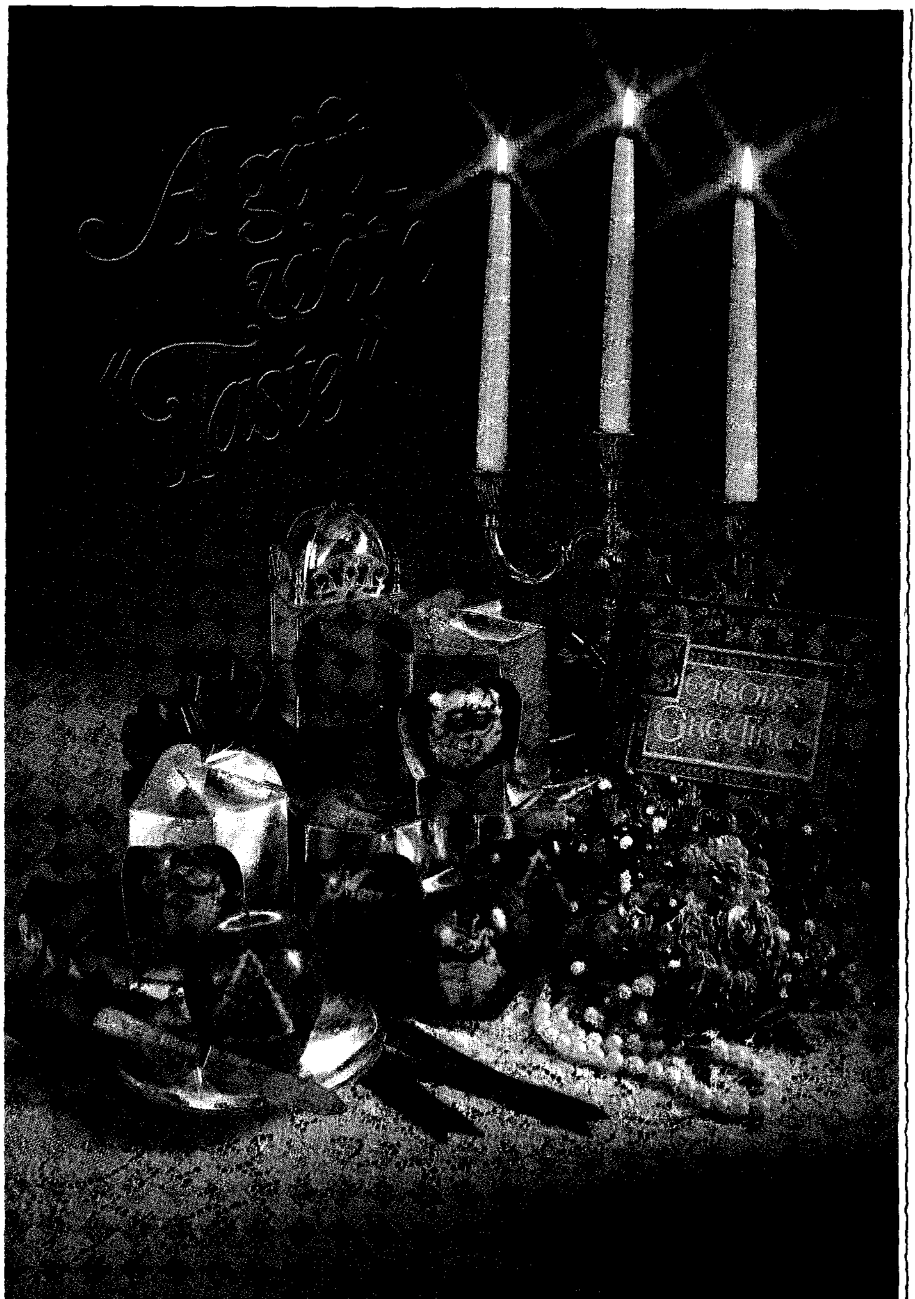

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room, saying that it was nine o'clock and we had better get going.

"But there is no Braille copy of the Scholastic Aptitude Test!" Miss Harper cried, ripping open the envelope.

"I don't know about that," the proctor said, turning to leave. "But this is a timed examination. You'd better get going."

"But there are some very complicated diagrams and graphs here," Miss Harper objected, rapidly turning pages. "I can't possibly describe them to him."

"I don't know about that," the proctor said, almost out of the room. "But since he's registered and has now received the tests, he'll be marked whether he does them or not." The proctor left, locking the door behind him.

"The testing service promised a Braille copy, Miss Harper—this is so unfair!" I cried, trying to control the rage mounting inside me. I wanted to call Mr. Woolly, call Mrs. Taylor, call Mr. Ireland, and complain and shout.

"I know," Miss Harper said. "But we don't want you to fail because you didn't try. We had better get started."

The first test I had to take was the three-hour-long Scholastic Aptitude Test, and its first section was mathematical. It seemed to be full of diagrams, graphs, charts, and maps—for want of a better collective term, figures. Sometimes Miss Harper would take my finger and trace it over the figure on the cold piece of paper; sometimes she would trace it on my hand with her finger or the point of a pencil, pausing at a bisecting line or a side of a rectangle, at an angle or a corner to tell me how it was marked—in degrees or inches, in combinations of letters and numbers. I had to build a figure in my mind from everything that Miss Harper was showing and telling me. I got so rattled that I began to doubt whether any of my mental images corresponded to the actual figures, and began flubbing even questions to which I knew the answers. I remember that at one point there was a question with a map. I was sure I knew the answer, but somehow, with Miss Harper guiding my finger over an ordinary sheet of paper, without differentiation between the mountains and the sea, between plains and lakes, as on our Braille maps at school, I suddenly couldn't make head or tail of the map in the question. And it seemed that as soon as Miss Harper had shown me one figure and I had tried to visualize it and answer a question about it there was another, more difficult figure. Sometimes, when there was a group of connected figures with intersecting lines, I wasn't sure whether, for instance, a particular triangle in the group was isosceles or equilateral or a particular shape was a trapezoid or a pentagon. And then there were mathematical theorems to be proved and algebraic calculations to be done—all in my head. (There was no way I could have used Braille to work them out; the system simply doesn't lend itself to that.)

I kept on looking at my Braille watch and asking Miss Harper to go over the questions again. I realized that questions that should have taken me a minute to answer were taking me three or four times as long, but the more I tried to hurry, the more bogged down I seemed to get. I felt dizzy. It seemed that I couldn't concentrate, that I'd lost my ability to manipulate numbers and variables mentally, that my mind was a sieve. If someone had put my head in a vise and slowly started tightening it—its serrated lips digging into my skull—I couldn't have been more frightened or frantic.

Even the verbal section of the Aptitude Test seemed to be beyond me. "Agricultural implements were discovered . . . Choice 1 . . . Choice 2 . . . Choice 3 . . . Choice 4 . . . Choice 5 . . ." Miss Harper read evenly, expressionlessly, not giving so much as a hint, by a pause, of what she might think was the correct choice. I couldn't recall what an "implement" was. *Implement*, *implement*, I thought. I know what that is. I've heard the word somewhere—but where? I started to sweat.

"Do you want me to go over it again?"

"Yes, please." It was like trying to climb a pole covered with thick bicycle grease. I would start up it only to slip right back down. Three's a lucky number, I thought, and said, "Choice Three."

"Three," Miss Harper said, her pencil making a little scratch.

I would get Miss Harper to mark one choice, then change my mind and get her to mark another choice, and, when I was on the next question, ask her to go back so that I could change my answer yet again. And that would be only one question down, with dozens, scores, perhaps hundreds to go.

"True or false? . . . Blank 1 . . . Blank 2 . . . Blank 3 . . . Blank

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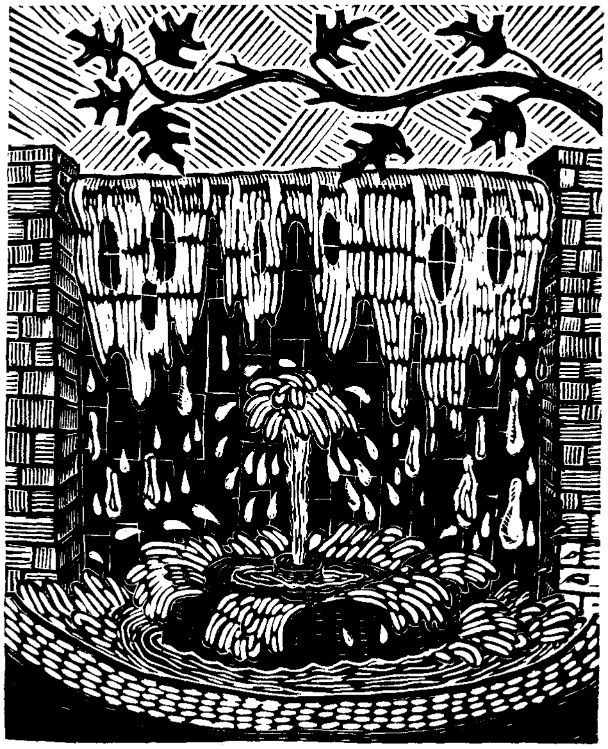

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4 . . ." I felt that my head was being squeezed by that tightening vise to the size of a skull on a headhunter's necklace.

The proctor unlocked the room and announced, "It's twelve o'clock." He swept up the half-finished Aptitude Test in the middle of a question that Miss Harper was reading to me. "Y'all have an hour off for lunch," he said.

As we came out of the room, Miss Harper whistled under her breath. "I'm a college graduate and I can see," she said, "and I couldn't have done many of those questions."

"But do you think I got some of them right?" I asked, trying to master myself—I was trembling all over.

A man joined us. He clapped me on the shoulder, almost making me fall. "You know, there's a trick to these tests," he said. "Like I tell the kids I teach, don't have second thoughts and change your answers, or the examination folks will sweep the floor with you—that they will." He laughed, making my heart sink even lower, if possible, than before.

Miss Harper began protesting about the missing Braille copy.

"I'm just an examination supervisor," the man said. "But I seem to remember that we had a blind fellow who came here and took the tests some years ago. He got a Braille copy, all right, but the dots were so worn down that he couldn't read much of it. The folks at Princeton must have decided that the copy wouldn't do you any good, so they just spared themselves the trouble of mailing it down here."

We were back in the locked room. We began doing the hour-long Achievement Test in English Composition. Part of it consisted of closely reasoned passages to test reading comprehension. I felt somewhat at a disadvantage, because I couldn't refer back to a word or a phrase by its place on the page. Instead, I had to get Miss Harper to read the whole wretched passage again. Similarly, another part of the test required rearranging scrambled sentences and clauses in a paragraph to make sense of it. Since I couldn't refer to all the bits and pieces on the page, I had to rearrange them mentally and then explain to Miss Harper how to mark them on the paper. Still another part of the test called for composing a little essay. I had brought along my typewriter for the purpose, and was able to type out the essay faster than I could have dictated it. Still, when I lost the thread of a thought, as I did on several occasions, there was no time to get Miss Harper to read back to me what I'd typed.

The composition test was followed by the Achievement Test in French. The French I had learned at the school was so rudimentary that I would not have offered it as one of my two electives if Columbia had not required proficiency in a second European language. I had learned French words less by their sound than by their configuration on a page of Braille, and this meant that sometimes the only way I could get the question was to ask Miss Harper to spell out the entire French sentence. I am an imbecile, I thought. Lower than an imbecile—an idiot.

My second elective was American history, and I went through the test on that rapidly. In fact, I got the impression that I gave the best part of my bad performance on it.

When we got back to school, Miss Harper and I told Mr. Woolly what had happened.

"Hell's bells!" Mr. Woolly exclaimed. "People at the Educational Testing Service will throw out the scores—we'll make sure they know they failed us. The people at Columbia won't bother about the scores even if they get them. They know that they'll be lucky to get you."

Mr. Woolly and I immediately wrote to the Testing Service and to Columbia, telling them the whole story, but their replies were far from reassuring; the Testing Service informed us, without any apology, that, just as the examination supervisor had surmised, its Braille copies of the Aptitude Test were too worn down to have done me any good, and that other blind students had managed without them. We objected. But the Testing Service stood by its method of testing me and—in accordance with its practice at the time—forwarded the scores to Columbia, without disclosing them to the school or me.

I remember feeling in the aftermath of the tests that even if I had had good Braille copies of all the tests and had been given all the time in the world to complete them I might not have done much better. Anyway, because of my own sense of inadequacy I endowed the Testing Service with mysterious, almost supernatural powers of infallibly evaluating the intelligence of students. I felt that the Testing Service had exposed, as nothing before had,

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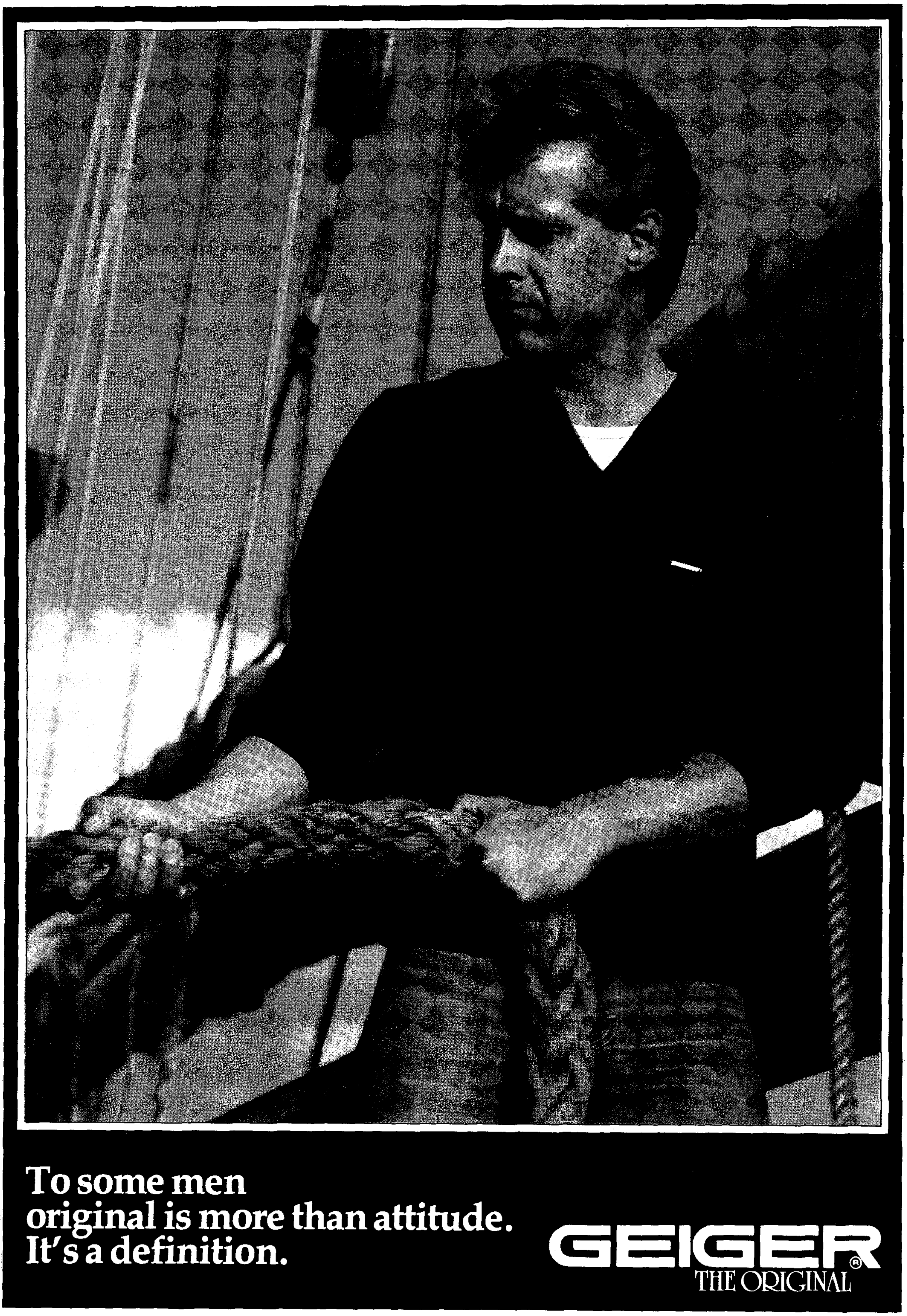
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the big holes in my formal education, which everyone at school thought had been filled up with learning—that it had exposed, perhaps, the poor quality of my Arkansas education. I thought that I might have excelled at the school precisely because its standards fell short of those of Columbia and Harvard, the Testing Service and Perkins, and even, possibly, Little Rock Senior High School. During my three years at the school, I had often been depressed and anxious, but the depression that gripped me immediately after the College Board tests was different. It affected not only my sleep and appetite but also my voice and step. Even raising my hand to comb my hair was an effort. The simplest tasks, the simplest motions seemed to weigh me down, as if I were a coolie laboring up a mountain with a thousand pounds of someone else's luggage on my head.

What I remember even more vividly than the experience of taking the tests is dreaming about them. Sometimes the examiner was a dog, sometimes a bully from my childhood, and sometimes a Muslim village priest from my father's childhood who used to accept as donations little boys with impecunious parents and fit them with iron skullcaps, so that they would grow up with the heads and brains of children and walk around the village mindlessly giggling and begging alms for the mosque. The examiner, in whatever guise, would shout, "True or false?"

During this period, no one around me knew or guessed what I was feeling, and the astonishing thing was that a few days after taking the tests I myself half forgot them. I bounced back, carrying on with my normal school life, which I had never really left off, and feeling like a mythical creature in a book. The more this creature was beaten up, thrown on the ground, jumped on, danced on, the more quickly it sprang up, as if the point of life were resilience in adversity.

ALMOST as soon as the Christmas vacation was over, our senior year had become a series of public rituals—or preparations for them—that had little to do with our studies, and even less to do with what awaited us on the other side of graduation. There was, for instance, the senior play. Miss Wilson, who was in charge of putting it on that year, picked "Bolts and Nuts," by Jay Tobias. One January day, she assembled the seven of us seniors in the auditorium, along with boys and girls from the other classes in the junior-senior high school who were to have parts in the play, and told us that it was set somewhere in Missouri and concerned a private sanitarium full of crazies—people who had cat phobias, contamination phobias, claustrophobias, and phobias about people with phobias.

"Miss Wilson, you want to expose our school as a crazy house?" Oather asked.

"Now, Oather Brown, would I do a thing like that?" Miss Wilson asked disingenuously, and continued, "But I know exactly which one of you is going to play which crazy."

Everyone protested that we weren't crazy. Miss Wilson laughed, and ran down the list of characters in the order of their appearance and told us whom she had chosen for which part. Carol Rowe was to play Benita Bolt, a niece of the manager of the Bolt Sanitarium for Mental Hygiene; Lois Woodward was to play Lutie Spinks, a flirtatious maid; Anna Belle Morris was to play Rebecca Bolt, the manager of the sanitarium; Barbara Worthen was to play

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Martha Grubb, a melancholiac cook; Max Cary was to play Twink Starr, Benita's megalomaniac fiancé; Oather Brown was to play Dr. Hippocrates Joy, a psychiatrist; Kenneth Harrison (he was seventeen and in the tenth grade) was to play Henry Goober, a porter with a phobia about lunatics; I was to play Phineas Plunkett, a lawyer with a humility complex; Pegie Johnson (she was sixteen and in the ninth grade) was to play Miss Prunella Figg, a claustrophobic patient; George McNabb was to play Cadwalleder Clippy, a patient who had a cat phobia; Joyce Boyle was to play Mrs. Gertie Glossop, a patient with a contamination phobia; Kenneth Bruton was to play William Glossop, her darling child; and Norman Penix was to play Jack Gordon, a young interne.

Since Braille transcription was very time-consuming and, in that period, couldn't be mechanically duplicated, it took us several days to put into Braille one complete script and copies of our individual lines. Since we could refer to the complete script only by turns, it was some time before we understood exactly what was going on in the play or how our parts fitted together. Then everyone seemed to have a quarrel with Miss Wilson over the part he or she had been chosen for. Lois said she couldn't wink and therefore couldn't play the flirtatious maid. I protested against being cast as the oily lawyer. But Miss Wilson was stubborn and unyielding. "I'm your teacher," she said. "You just have to do what I tell you, or we won't have a senior play."

I remember that we performed "Bolts and Nuts" on the first two evenings in May, playing each time to a full house of students, parents, patrons, trustees, and friends of the school, but even from a distance of decades the memory of the experience is excruciating. The puns we had to deliver seemed painfully silly, Lois and Anna Belle forgot their lines several times and had to be prompted in a loud stage whisper by Miss Wilson, and Norman Penix had to be practically led around the stage. Once, I was late appearing onstage because I couldn't change costumes fast enough. On top of it all, the play, with all its crazy characters, often sounded like our locker-room carryings on, recklessly put on the stage for everyone to laugh at.

ONE day, we seniors all met in Mr. Chiles's classroom and talked out our Class History, our Class Will, and

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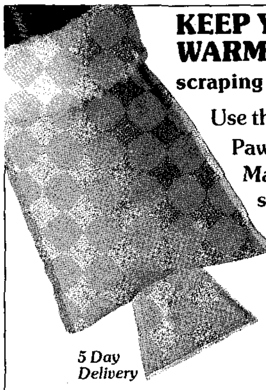

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our Class Prophecy, sparking ideas off each other as if our words were steel and flint. The documents were slated for publication in the *Arkansas Braille News*, and I was the scribe, taking notes in Braille and reading them back to my classmates before typing out the copy for Miss Harper to get ready for the printer. Reading these effusions today makes me squirm, but back then we all agreed with what Oather said to me at the end of the session: "Whip, we hit every last nail on the head!"

CLASS HISTORY

Way back in 1939,
A new school was built for the blind,
And as the first term did commence,
Some bright young pupils entered thence.

There was George McNabb, only but a chap,
And sweet and timid Anna Belle, fresh from her mother's lap.
To add to this distinguished crew,
There was Brown, Bruton too. . . .

On into sensational seniorship we did glide,
Blowing loud and bursting with pride. . . .

About this time, with sheepish grin,
The pride of the Orient came sneaking in.
He ascended from the below—
Either he left, or they made him go [a reference to my skipping eleventh grade].

Some more misfortune befell us somehow,
For the north winds blew in Carol Lynn Rowe.
She drifted in like Iowa snow,
And set poor Norman's heart aglow.

CLASS WILL

The senior class of 1952, in its last will and testament, which has been duly signed, witnessed, and probated, do bequeath to the following:

Oather Brown wills to Bruce Wing his love for candy and girls. To Johnnie Bill Cole, his wrestling tights, in the hope he will fill them well. To Mr. Chiles, his guitar playing ability, and all the boys who have borrowed his hair oil and shoe polish do not have to pay them back. . . .

Ved Mehta bequeaths one windowless storeroom to Mr. Hartman for his use in the daring exploration of photography. It is his due warning that Mr. Hartman keep the rats chased out so they won't be annoying him. . . . To Kenneth Harrison, Ved leaves one bushel full of fifty-seven and one-half pounds of contempt for geometry. . . .

Norman Penix bequeaths his world history book to Mr. Chiles, who seems to be interested in that subject. He leaves his geometry book to anyone who wants it, provided the person has no natural tendency toward insanity.

CLASS PROPHECY

The scene is a wrestling arena in a large city in the year 1957. . . .

Two men enter the arena and sprint down the aisle between the cheering masses. . . . One man's name is Cutie Ken [Bruton]. . . . The other man's name

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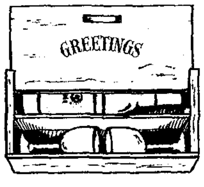

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is Un-normal Norman [Penix].... The tall helper [Penix] then proceeds to give Cutie a brisk rubdown. He performs this rubbing with such skill one can tell he is well into his sophomore year at the Carver School of Chiropractics in Oklahoma City....

As time draws near for the match to start, a young announcer at ringside [me] is getting his equipment in shape. To his right, he has two tape recorders, one loud speaker, and one amplifier. To his left, he has two Braille writers, one typewriter, one microphone, three letters to be read, four passports, two college entrance exams, five insurance policies, one plane ticket, a folder of senate activities, and a Coca-Cola. As he gets his gear in shape, a young piano-tuning politician [Oather] comes into sight. He is smoking his pipe full of Bull Durham, as usual.

The young announcer stops him for an interview. "Mr. Brown, what do you plan to do if you are elected mayor of Prattsville?"

The politician speaks, after several deep puffs on his pipe. "Well, lad, when I am elected mayor of Prattsville, I plan to have the city tune every piano in town—me doing the tuning, of course. You may quote me, lad."

ONE May evening, after supper, there was a baccalaureate service for us seniors in the auditorium, with the whole school present. The tenor of the service was lofty, as if we were denizens of some great academy about to leave it forever. A sombre, mysterious piece was played by Carol Rowe on the school's organ, after which we all stood up and sang "Come, Thou Almighty King." The Reverend Dr. R. D. Adams, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Little Rock, gave a sonorous invocation, and while we remained standing the choir sang "Goin' Home," whose melody Dvořák used in his "New World" Symphony.

We sat down, and Dr. Adams delivered a sermon based on the parable of the feast to which the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind were invited. He commended to the Lord's care each of us graduating seniors—citing by name Oather Brown and George McNabb, Kenneth Bruton and Norman Penix, Carol Rowe and Anna Belle Morris, and me—as we stepped into the new, treacherous world outside the gates. Then we all stood up, and Dr. Adams led us in singing "Onward, Christian Soldiers." The hymn had never sounded more powerful and rousing to my ear, perhaps because the smallest child in the auditorium knew its words and tune, and all present threw themselves into its spirit.

Dr. Adams closed the service with a benediction thanking the school au-

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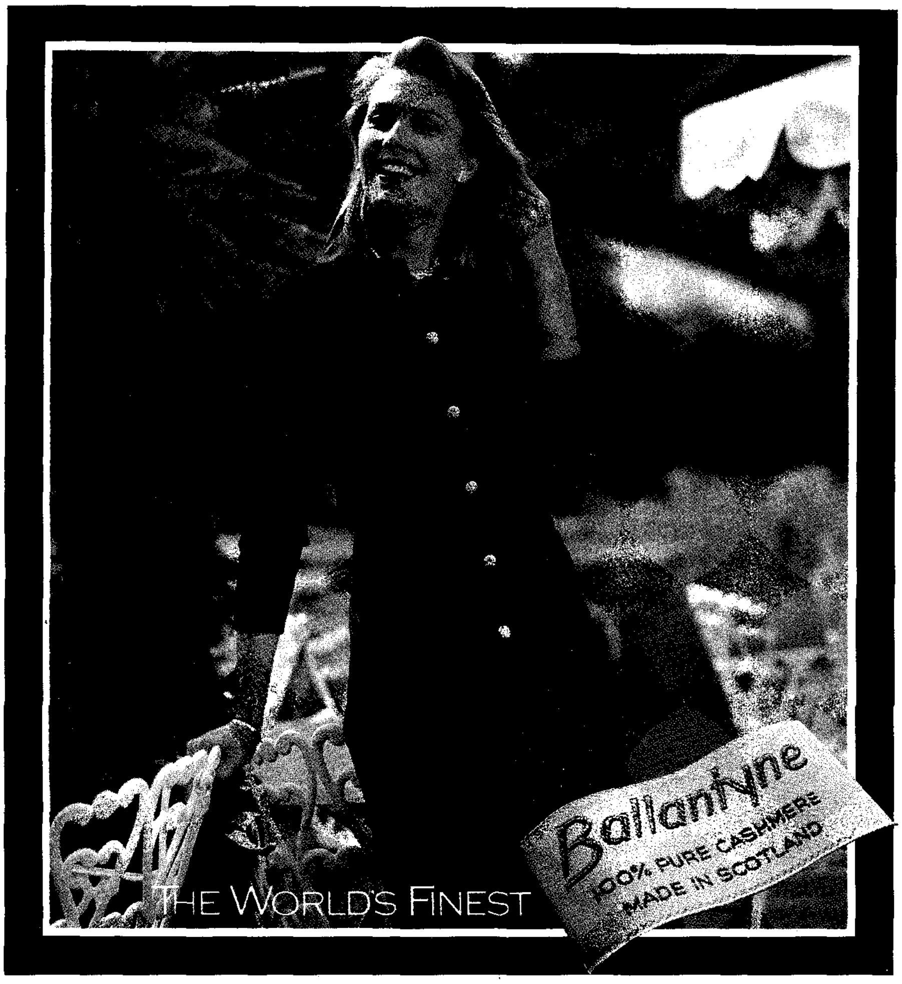

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thorities for having brought the seven of us so far forward into the light.

WE were now in the middle of May, with only a week to go until graduation. Still there wasn't any definite word from Columbia. The tests, I thought—the tests have done me in. Yet the one or two letters we got back from Columbia in answer to our inquiries had seemed friendly. I would fret and console myself, only to fret again. Once I graduate, I will have to get out of the school, I thought. There won't be Mr. Woolly to turn to. Where will I go? What will I do? I don't even know exactly where and how I will spend the summer. I planned to go to Los Angeles soon after graduation in order to see Daddyji, who, a year or so after his retirement, had managed to get himself across to America as a Fulbright visiting professor at the U.C.L.A. Medical School. But the Fulbright people had paid only his passage; he was not earning anything, so there was no telling how long he could stay on in the country and I could stay with him. Besides, just being in Los Angeles doing nothing all day, having no definite college plans, was frightening. "The time for my graduation is growing closer," I had written to Daddyji in one of my many anxious letters. "I would like to be sure of my future. Nobody can be sure of the future itself. However, there could be some planning about it." There was the old worry: If Columbia did accept me, how would I pay for my education there? And the new worry: If I did get into Columbia and managed somehow to pay my way, would I have as much trouble settling there as people there said I would? It does take time for a blind person to settle in a new place, I would think. I have never been on a college campus. I have no idea what campuses are like—whether they are housed in one gigantic building or consist of many little buildings. I wrote to Sister Nimi:

> I think of the life that's ahead of me. I have to go to college, where a new era of my life will start, where I will have to build a third home, where everything will be entirely new and on a much larger scale. All these thoughts create nightmares.

At my urging, Mr. Woolly wrote this letter to Columbia's admissions office on May 16th:

> GENTLEMEN:
> Some months ago I made application for admission to Columbia College for Ved Mehta, a blind Indian youth who

will graduate from high school next week.

To date, he has not been advised as to whether he will be accepted. Since he is most anxious to attend a University in the United States, he would appreciate some word as to the possibilities, so as to know whether to make application to some other University.

Sincerely yours,
J. M. Woolly, Superintendent

I finally received this letter from Columbia:

May 20, 1952

DEAR MR. MEHTA:

We have now received your College Board scores, and I am sorry to report that it is our judgment that they are not of sufficiently good quality to indicate that you could be expected to do good work in the kind of program offered here. In view of this fact and the keenly competitive situation with which we have to deal, we have decided that we cannot admit you. Perhaps I should add that we have tried, in coming to this decision, to give appropriate weight to the special handicap under which you are laboring.

We sincerely regret the necessity of disappointing you.

Very truly yours,
Bernard P. Ireland
Assistant Director

I was crushed, but I immediately wrote to Mr. Ireland begging to be allowed to repeat the College Board tests and pleading for a reconsideration of my application. Mr. Woolly wrote to him on my behalf. At the same time, he fired off letters to friends of Daddyji and friends of the school asking for their help. On May 29th, he wrote to Mr. Sundaram:

> Columbia Admissions Officer Mr. Bernard P. Ireland has just informed me that Ved Mehta will not be admitted because his College Board scores do not seem to be adequate.
>
> I am wondering if you could look into the situation to see if anything can be done for Ved.
>
> You must be assured that Ved does have the mental ability to do satisfactory, if not outstanding, work at Columbia. The scores from the College Board are probably not too valid, in my estimation, since none were in Braille and thus all of them were read to Ved. No additional time was given him and he had only a week to prepare for them, since we were informed he must take the tests very shortly before the scheduled date.
>
> I am enclosing a copy of his transcript which indicates the quality of his work. Our teachers are among the best qualified people and they feel he is adequately prepared to make a success there.
>
> If you feel you can give him any help we will appreciate it very much.

And Mr. Woolly wrote in a similar vein to Norman Cousins and to Miss Georgie Lee Abel, an educational consultant for the American Foundation for the Blind, in New York.

Everyone at school who came to know of my rejection was unnerved by

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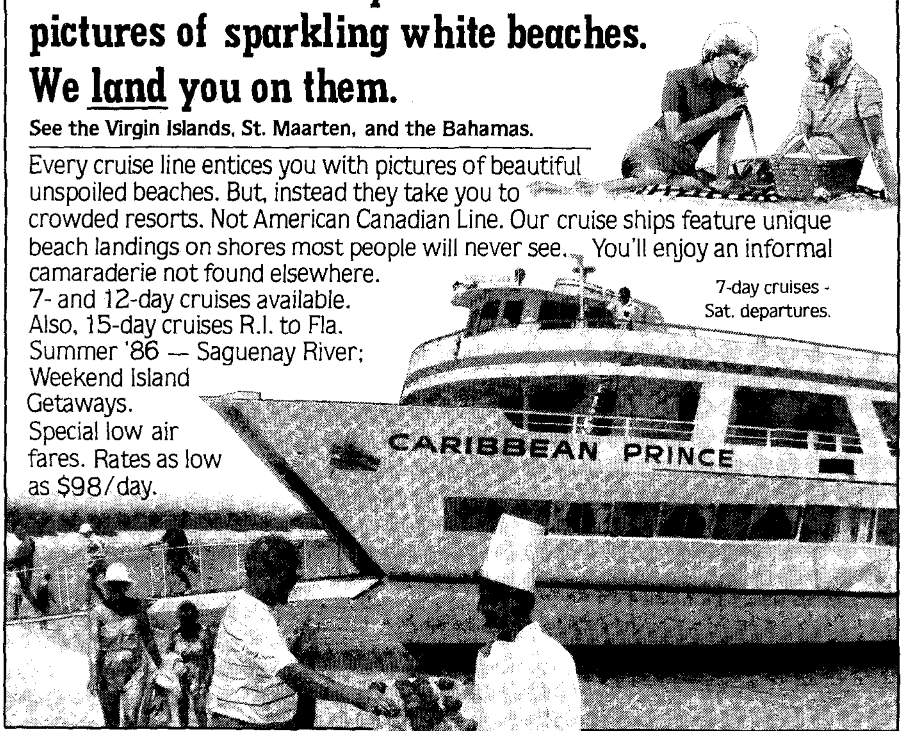

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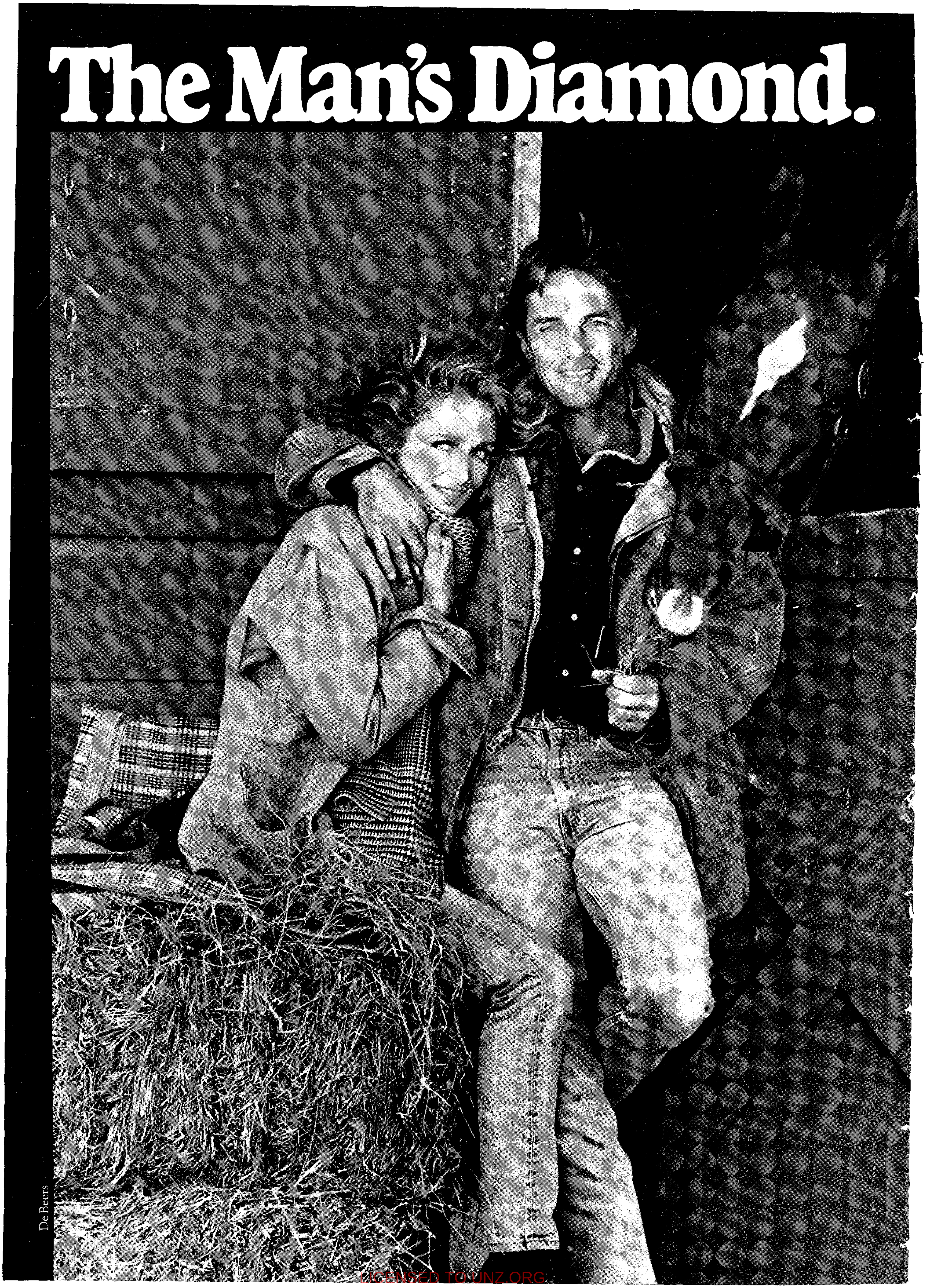
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it. As for me, I remember that I was not at all comforted by the justifications, alibis, excuses offered by everyone around me or by the ones I could think up for myself. Still, I persevered in trying to get the Columbia decision reversed.

Finally, I received this letter, dated June 6th, over the signature of Bernard Ireland:

> Dear Mr. Mehta:
>
> It is my understanding that friends of yours have raised a question about the possibility of our reconsidering your application for admission to Columbia College because you contend that the circumstances under which you took the College Board Examinations were not adapted to offsetting the obvious disadvantages imposed by your blindness. I understand also that you have asked about the possibility and desirability of your retaking these Examinations.
>
> I have discussed the whole problem in careful detail with the authorities of the College Entrance Examination Board and it is their opinion that there are no forms of these Examinations available which would cast additional light on the probability of your success in Columbia College. If your request is to be reconsidered, therefore, it must be on the basis of the evidence now at hand. While I cannot encourage you to expect a reversal of the action already taken, I shall be glad to resubmit the matter to the Committee on Admissions if you care to write to me requesting that I do so and stating in careful detail why you believe you encountered more difficulty in making good scores on the Examinations than has been encountered by other blind boys who have taken these tests with more successful results.

I did what Mr. Ireland asked me to do, but as I enumerated all the extenuating circumstances for him it didn't occur to me to mention that my cultural background was so different from that of the Americans taking the tests that even if all the circumstances had been ideal I probably could not have done well.

IT was the evening of our commencement exercises. The seven of us graduating seniors, wearing whatever dress clothes we had, were seated on folding chairs near the lectern on the small stage of the auditorium. The stage curtain was closed, as if we were actors waiting for our play to begin. On the other side of the curtain, seats were audibly filling up.

"I wish I wasn't graduating," Bruton said. "I can't imagine life without the school to come back to in September."

"One of the blind organizations is sure to find you a good vending stand," McNabb said. "You can't stay at the school forever."

"Mr. Chiles has done a good job of staying on here," Bruton said.

"Why do you fellows sound so solemn?" Oather asked Bruton and McNabb. "I've been looking forward to this day since I came here as a little boy."

"You can look forward to getting out of here," McNabb said. "You got piano tuning under your belt."

"I hear that in sighted schools they have beer and wild parties at graduation—we don't get to do any of that," Anna Belle said.

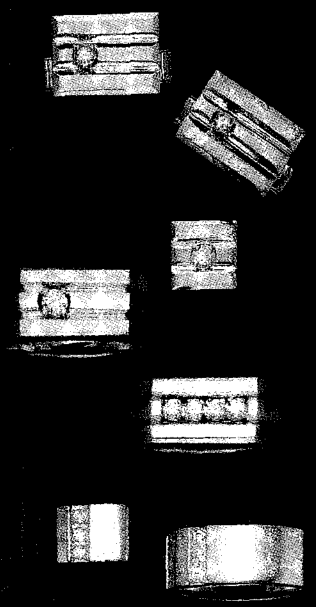
"Next year, Max Cary will be dancing with Pegie—the bum!" Bruton said. Bruton had recently been dating Pegie Johnson.

There was general conversation about the difficulties of surviving outside the school—finding jobs and places to live. For myself, I felt heavy in the heart for a different reason. I didn't know when I would get back to Arkansas, when, if ever, I would see my classmates again—they were going back to their homes in Prattsville, in Newport, in Mabelvale, in Greenbrier, in Fort Smith, while I was going out to California—or any of the other people who had filled my life in Arkansas.

"I wonder how many people are out there," Bruton was saying. With some of our vending-stand profits, Mr. Woolly had ordered for each of us seniors twenty engraved invitations to the commencement exercises. Each of the other seniors had sent out all twenty and had received a number of acceptances. I hadn't sent out any. Daddyji could not afford to come from California, and I knew that no one else in my family could come. To shield myself from feeling sad or having to make do by asking Joe and Jean Red, for instance, I had simply dismissed the whole idea of the graduation ceremony as a stupid tribal rite, something not worth bothering with. But now that the ceremony was at hand I felt twinges of pain, perhaps like those an old classmate of mine in India had told me he felt in his phantom hands—his forearms had been blown off in the war. Even now, I thought, the families of my classmates are gathering in the auditorium, waiting to surround the new graduates at the end of the ceremony. I am all alone. There is no one waiting for me.

I noticed that Oather was suddenly quiet. I wondered if he was going over his valedictory speech in his head. I immediately felt that I had forgotten my salutatory speech, perhaps in my

She's always been a city girl, all high heels and low-cut gowns. Even when we bought the ranch, she kept an urbane sense of style. Like riding in a riding habit or giving me a diamond in the middle of nowhere. And that diamond looks as great in the city as it does out here. What a gift. Bold. Handsome. Yet classic as a pin-stripe suit. She has a way of making everything civilized.



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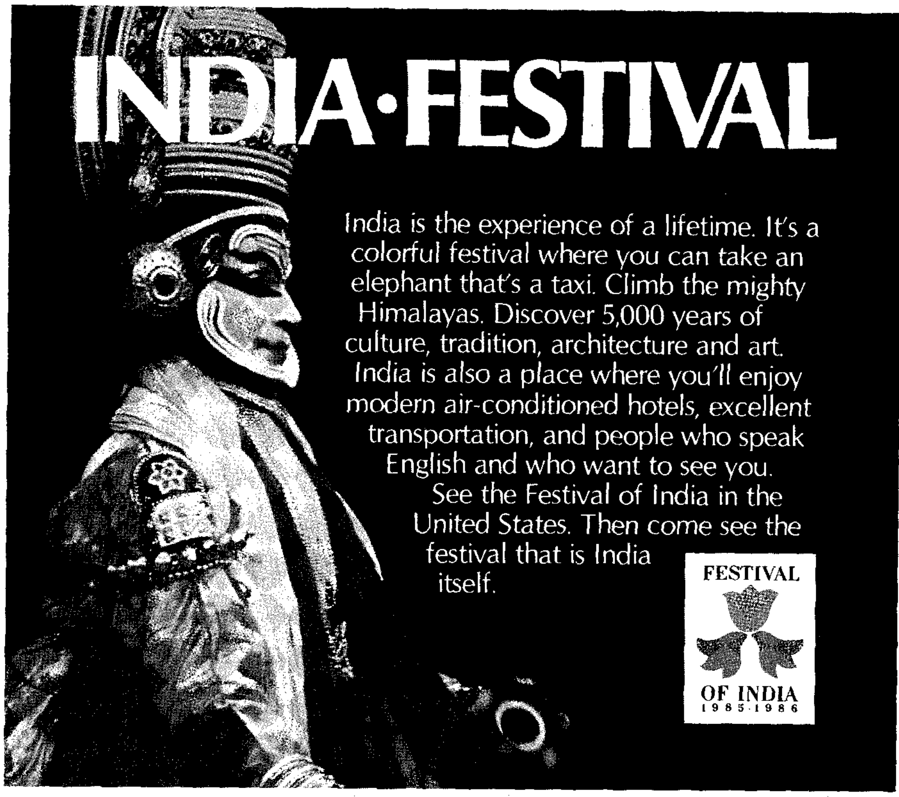

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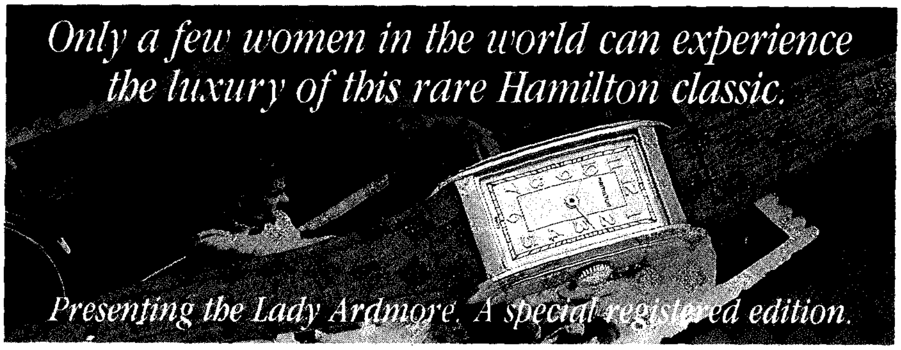

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nervous worry over speaking in front of Mr. F. E. Davis, who was to be our commencement speaker. He was the superintendent of the American Printing House for the Blind, in Louisville, Kentucky, where most of the American Braille publications and Talking Books originated. As head of the Printing House, he was a nationally influential figure in the work for the blind and was therefore one of the first people I had appealed to when I was trying to come to America. He had opposed my coming, however, striking a theme all too familiar to me by then from my correspondence with educators in Britain—that blindness was a social maladjustment in itself, and that my coming to the West at such an early age would lead to cultural maladjustment as well, so that I would be a misfit in the East as well as in the West. Mr. Davis's opposition had almost proved fatal, for my letters to American schools for the blind were often referred to him for his advice. As it happened, he had been Mr. Woolly's predecessor at the Arkansas School, and I had often reflected that if he had been its superintendent when I applied I would not have won admission. Indeed, if Mr. Woolly, who had been unaware of Mr. Davis's opposition, had stopped to ask the simplest questions that Mr. Davis and other educators asked—such as what would happen if I got ill in America, and what I would do when school was closed for holidays, to say nothing of what effect my Western education would ultimately have on me—he might have independently reached Mr. Davis's conclusion. He certainly would not have said (as he liked to tell the story), "Boy, come on over!"—as if he were speaking to me on the telephone and I were just a long bus ride away from the school. Now, sitting there about to share the stage with Mr. Davis, I wondered if he, in his commencement address, would refer to our correspondence, as he had politely done when I went to Louisville during a Christmas vacation and met him at the Printing House. Would he take note of the fact that I was the salutatorian of my class, and compliment Mr. Woolly for his boldness in accepting me? Or would he remain silent about me, perhaps taking the view that the evidence in my case simply wasn't in yet—would not be in for years? Perhaps he knew what negative opinions the authorities at the Educational Testing Service and Columbia had formed of me. The thought made me blush with shame. I tried to tell myself that it didn't matter what Mr. Davis thought—that I was going to California, a whole different world, and that there (if Columbia didn't take me in the end) I would somehow get myself admitted to a college where no one would even know who Mr. Davis was.

There was a disturbance in the curtain, and Mr. Woolly came onstage. "Boys and girls, y'all know your way to the lectern?" Mr. Woolly whispered. "Sure you won't stumble when the Honorable Mr. Prewitt calls you to come get your diploma?" Mr. T. A. Prewitt was the chairman of the school's board of trustees. Norman said he felt a little uncertain. Mr. Woolly walked with him the few steps from his chair to the lectern and back. "You're a fine-looking group," Mr. Woolly whispered proudly, moving back a few steps, as if he were going to take our picture. "You're the best class we've ever graduated from A.S.B."

There was another disturbance in the curtain. This time, it was Mr. Davis. He was introduced all around. He greeted me warmly, mentioning our previous meeting, and sat down with us.

Then came a rattle of curtain rings as Mr. Woolly drew back the curtain, and the commencement exercises were under way.

I remember the ceremony hazily. I remember that there was some organ music, and an invocation by the Reverend Dr. Jeff E. Davis. I remember feeling awkward when my turn to speak came. I remember that I stepped up to the lectern and mechanically recited the introduction, imagining that Mr. Davis was looking over my shoulder and judging me. "This day marks the end of many happy years we have spent in our second home," I said rapidly, and then made an effort to slow down. "I was fifteen when I came to America and was confronted with a rugged and monstrous mountain. Every member of the class has experienced a moment of depression in venturing out on this mountain. Yet there is no retreat from this climbing for people who are determined to aim high and keep on climbing. We will be climbing this mountain for the rest of our lives. And we are going to need your help and understanding. If we are to take our place in society, we must be accepted as intelligent citizens with good character and education. We are grateful to those who have aided us in starting our journey."

I sat down, and Anna Belle sang

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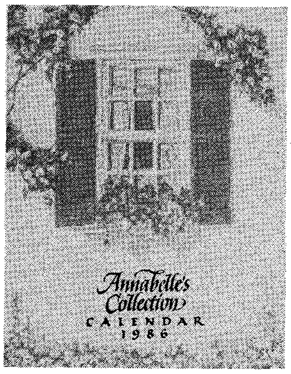

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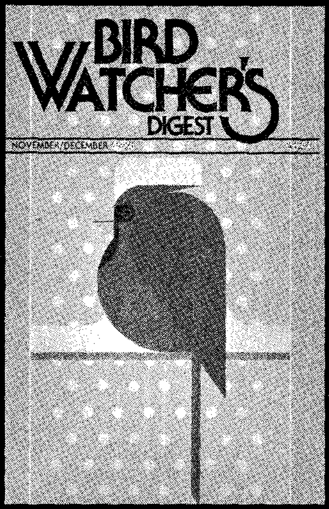
a solo. Oather gave his speech. Finally, Mr. Davis took his place at the lectern. I remember that at one point he turned to me and said, "Some years ago, I corresponded with this young man. I have to admit to you that Dr. Farrell, of Perkins, and I were dead wrong when we advised him to stay home." Far from gloating, I felt depressed, perversely thinking that he was wrong now and had been right before. As so often in the past, it seemed that once I had got the thing I wanted I wasn't able to enjoy it.

Mr. Prewitt now came to the lectern. As he called our names, we walked over and received our rolled-up diplomas. Miss Harper had described the diploma to us beforehand—it had on it an angel, a figure in a sunburst, and an eagle with a ribbon in its mouth saying "Regnat Populus"—but when mine was handed to me I was surprised by how big it was, and I walked back to my seat with it not knowing what to do with it or where to put it. It rattled in my hand, as if to draw attention to itself. Then, just as I had sat down and laid the wretched thing on my lap, Mr. Prewitt started calling some of us by name again. He presented Oather with a Certificate of Proficiency in Piano Tuning and Industrial Arts, Bruton with one in Typing and Industrial Arts, McNabb with one in Industrial Arts, Anna Belle with one in Typing and Home Economics, and Carol Rowe with one in Home Economics. Then Mr. Woolly took over and called my name. He presented me with the annual Stanley Medal for Scholarship, a little gold triangular leaf with a pin on the back. I considered my medal a good omen, thinking that it would help me get into a college, much as my classmates' Certificates of Proficiency would help them get jobs.

At the end of the ceremony, the families of my classmates rushed onto the stage. I quickly walked down its steps and up the aisle of the auditorium.

Waiting at the door was Mr. Woolly, like a pastor ready to offer a handshake and a few words for each of his parishioners as they leave the church. "That was a fine speech you made," he said, shaking my hand. "You and Oather were neck and neck for valedictorian, but you had to do your junior and senior classwork in one year."

Mr. Woolly turned to someone else, and suddenly Wayne Tidman was



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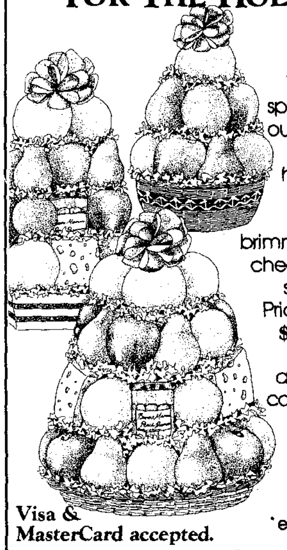

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there. "You really swung it, Buster," he said. "I can't believe you're graduating a year ahead of me."

Lois joined us. "Wayne won the Stanley Medal the first year of high school, and now you. Two from our class!" I've finished a year ahead of her, I thought, but she still thinks of me as a classmate. Despite the fact that she went back to Raymond, I really do love her.

"Yes, it's quite an achievement to have the highest scholastic average in the junior-senior high school," Mr. Davis said, coming up to us.

"Among the boys," Wayne corrected him.

I thanked Mr. Davis for his words about me in his speech.

Oather walked past with his family. He heard my voice and came running back. He threw his arm around me. "Nice to have known you, Whip," he said, overwhelming me with his Bull Durham-chewing-tobacco smell. Then he rushed away.

With Oather's voice in my ear and his smell of tobacco in my head, I walked along the school's central corridor and down to the locker room, now empty—most people had packed earlier and taken their things out and put them by the side of the driveway or in the school bus. Oather was already becoming a memory. In fact, that was the last time I saw him, the last time I saw practically anyone from the school. Years later, in preparation for this narrative, I tried to find out what had happened to some of the people I'd known at the school. Bruton and McNabb were running vending stands in Little Rock. Barbara, who had got married and now had a son in his twenties, was also running a vending stand in Little Rock. Anna Belle Morris was a telephone-switchboard operator for the Arkansas Highway Department. Oather owned a piano store in Shreveport, Louisiana. No one seemed to know the whereabouts of Carol Rowe or Norman Penix. Lois was teaching in a school for the blind in New Mexico. Wayne, who had given up preaching, was teaching counselling skills at a college somewhere. Max Cary, when he was last heard of, had served a sentence in a Texas penitentiary for stock manipulation. Treadway, who had eventually come back and graduated from the school, was living in California; Vernelle had died. Mr. Woolly had retired. Mr. Chiles was still teaching at the school. Mr. Hartman had died. Miss Harper, who had taught at the

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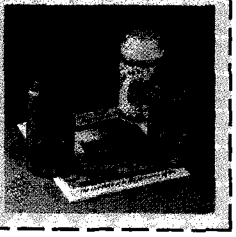

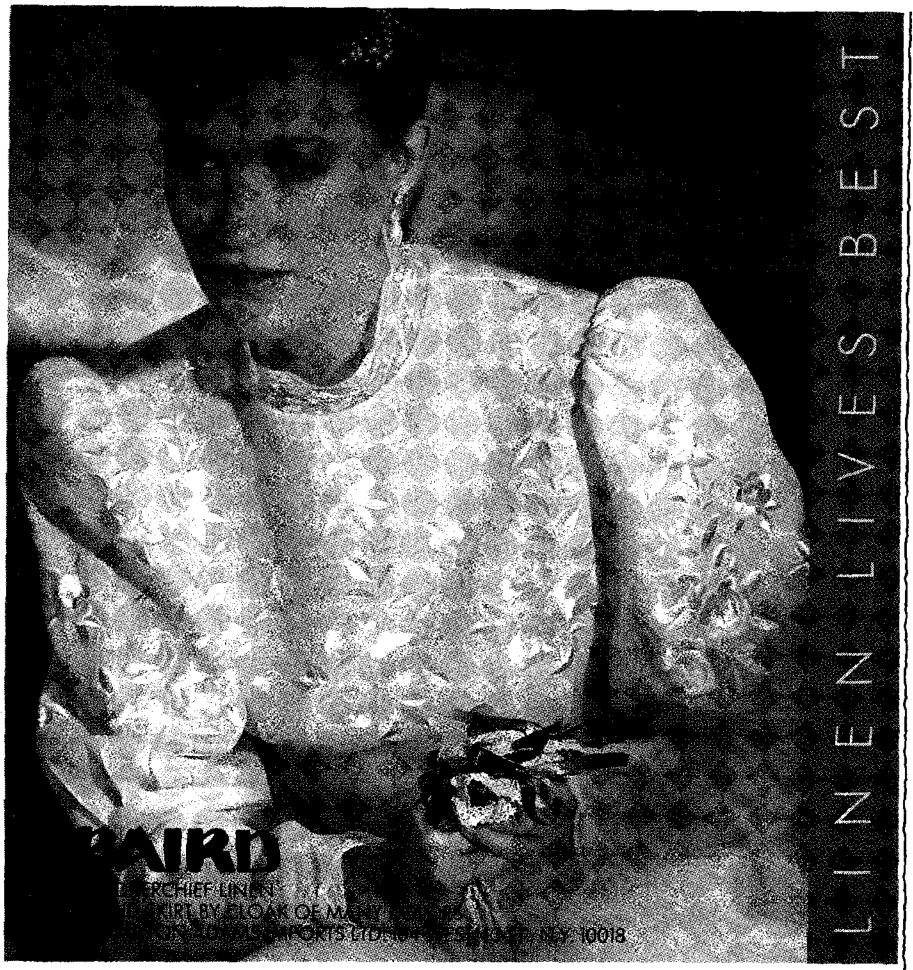

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school for some twenty years more, had got married, lived on a farm, and raised a family, but was now divorced. A few of the people I had known had not got married, but most of them had, and were fathers and mothers. From what I heard, none of them seemed to stand out from the mass of American humanity in the way every one of them had stood out in my school days. When I did look up a few of them for myself, in the hope of comparing memories, our conversations seemed never to get off the ground; none of the people shared my interest in recollecting our past. All of them turned out to be, in a sense, as inaccessible to me as the familiar but now vanished landmarks I had known: the Boys' Club where I swam and played chess had burned down, and the club had moved to a new site; the ice-cream plant where I had a summer job had gone out of business and been demolished; most of the stores on Main Street had disappeared with their old-fashioned buildings; the school plant itself had expanded and changed almost beyond recognition. Indeed, the people and the landmarks of my Arkansas seem to have left hardly a trace, except in my memory.

After graduation, my life took such a different turn—I didn't pursue my appeal to Columbia but, instead, started college in California—that my experiences in the school and in Arkansas fell away like feathers from a molting bird. The three years of my life I had spent in Little Rock became sealed in a compartment in my mind which I dreaded to open, not so much because they had been unhappy as because, in retrospect, the near-total submersion in a residential school for the blind seemed to accentuate my blindness, when all along my aspiration had been to be a well-adjusted member of the seeing society outside.

"SON, we have a present for you," Mr. Woolly said. I was finishing a farewell dinner with him, his wife, and their three sons in their small apartment, on the third floor of the school building, which I had never before entered—nor, as far as I knew, had any other student, or any teacher, ever entered it. He gave me a silver tie clasp—a bar with two snake chains and a pendant with a raised "A.S.B." design on it, like the design on my class ring. "Son, I want you to have this keepsake, so that whenever you wear it people will know you went here. You won't forget us, will you?"

Mr. Woolly fastened the clasp on

my shirt and pulled my tie through the snake chains. I had never worn a tie clasp with chains before, and the pendant, though small, felt a little heavy against my chest.

"How could he forget us, now that we've put our seal on him?" Mrs. Woolly asked.

"Mr. Woolly and Mrs. Woolly, I am deeply indebted to you," I said—stiffly, in spite of myself—feeling the blood rush to my cheeks. "If it had not been for you, Mr. Woolly, I might not ever have got to the States."

IN the morning, a number of faculty members surrounded Mr. Woolly's car. I said my goodbyes and got in the front seat, beside Mr. Woolly. Mr. Chiles, Miss Harper, and my old arithmetic teacher Miss Mitchell—who were coming with me to the airport—got in the back, and we set off. These are the streets I rode through when I first arrived, I thought. Then I scarcely knew what direction I was travelling in. Now I know all the street names—I know practically every turn.

"Son, what's the most precious thing you're taking from us?" Mr. Woolly asked, breaking the little silence in the car—it seemed that none of us knew what to say.

"Mobility," I said unhesitatingly. I was surprised at the baldness of my reply.

At the airport, when I was taking my leave, Mr. Chiles said, "Who knows? You might come back after the summer and go to Hendrix after all. You could major in history there, as I did." And do what, I thought. Come back to the school, like Mr. Chiles, and teach there?

"Hendrix is a great place," Mr. Woolly was saying. "It's one of the best in the country. We could keep an eye on you there, and you could come and visit us whenever you wanted to."

"Hendrix and Arkansas are not quite right for me," I said. "I'd like to be in a bigger place."

"The orbit of influence of any one person is limited," Mr. Chiles said.

"Well, we'll help you get into any college you want to go to," Mr. Woolly said. "Just let us know."

"Amen," Miss Harper said.

"Amen," Miss Mitchell said.

I thanked them, and soon I was once more in an airplane—this time on my way to the new frontier of California. —VED MEHTA

(This is the second part of a two-part article.)

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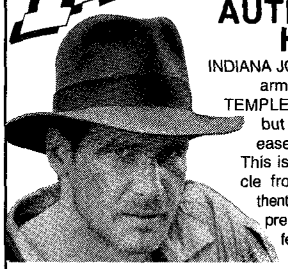

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A REPORTER AT LARGE

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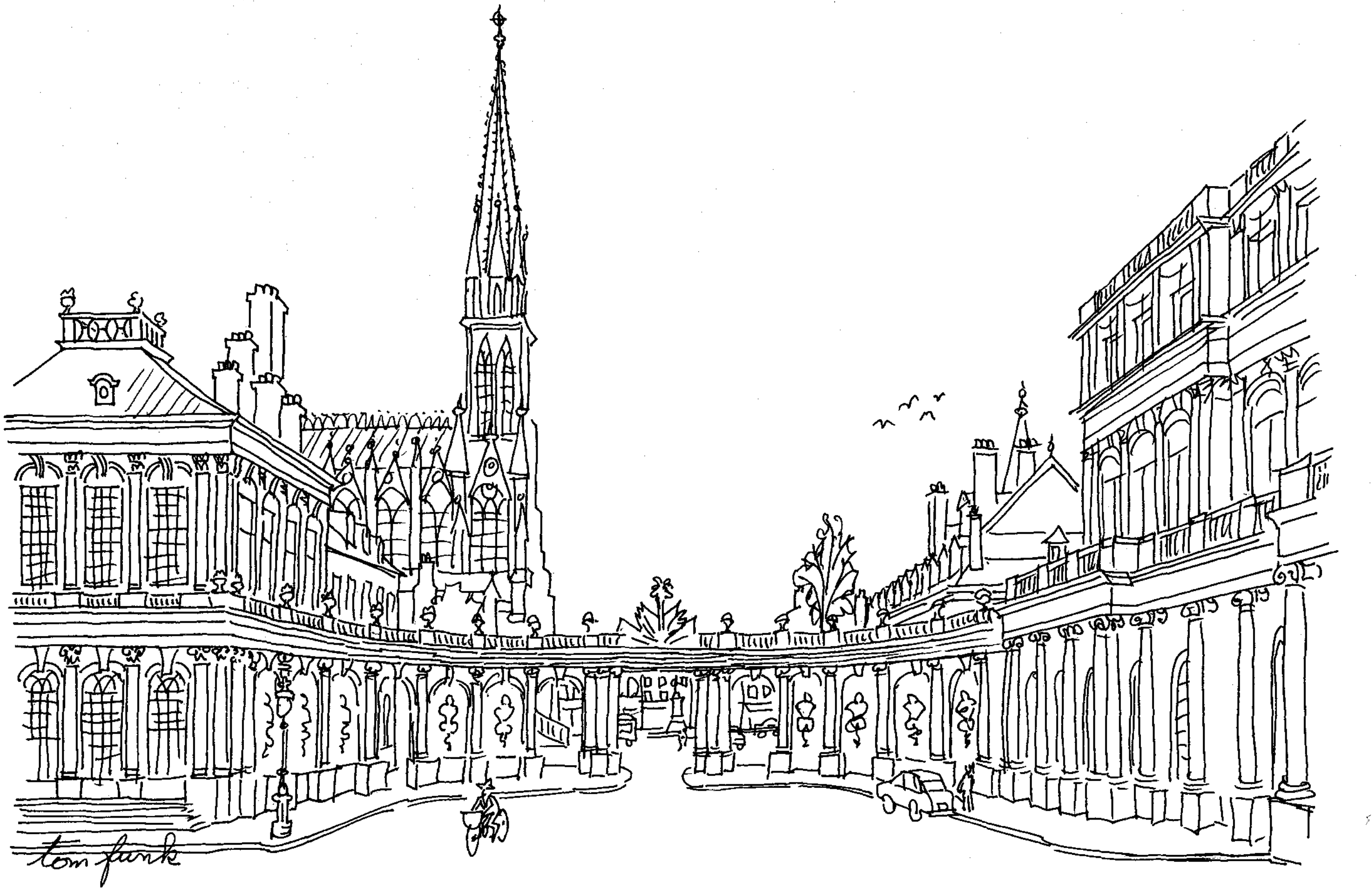

MY wife and I spent the better part of a week not long ago in northeastern France, in Nancy, the ancient capital of the ancient duchy of Lorraine. On the little form that visitors are asked to fill out before landing in France, I had declared that the purpose of our visit was tourism. That was only partly true. Our visit to France, to Nancy, was also a kind of pilgrimage, a kind of genealogical homecoming. Nancy, I had understood from childhood, was the birthplace of the man who founded our family in America—my great-grandfather Henri Constant Roueché. I wasn't seriously looking for roots, however, and, as it turned out, I didn't find any. I simply wanted to see where he, and I, had come from.

But first, before going on to Nancy, we gave ourselves a couple of days in Paris, and were rewarded by more than its usual incomparable pleasures. One afternoon, circling around the Opéra on the way to the Boulevard Haussmann and the Galeries Lafayette, I was stopped by traffic at a three-point intersection. My waiting gaze drifted across the bedlam flow of cars to a building wall and a street sign—to two street signs. One of them read "Rue Gluck." The other, a few feet nearer the intersection, read "Place Jacques Rouché." That wasn't, of course, precisely my name (although it would most certainly be pronounced the same), but it was close enough to give me an agreeable twinge. And it inspired me that evening to open the Paris telephone directory. I opened it and found my name—my name this time with every letter in place. I found it twice: "Roueche, H.; 5 Av. Observatoire, *6e, 326.20.15*" and "Roueche, G.; 21 rue Faidherbe, 11e, 371.06.49." I showed the listing to my wife. My command of French, despite my name, goes little deeper than "*Avez-vous un Herald Tribune?*" Kay's French is reasonably functional. She sat down on the edge of the hotel bed and dialled H. Roueche. She spoke and listened and spoke, and hung up. I stood at the window and looked down at the Rue du Bac. She dialled again, and talked and listened. She hung up. I turned back from the window.

"Well?"

"I talked to two women. One sounded quite old and the other fairly young. They both married into the family. They don't pronounce the name the way we do. They don't use an accent. When I said we pronounced our name 'Roo-*shay*,' they sounded puzzled. One of them called herself 'Roosh,' and the other called herself 'Roo-esch.' They both thought that their husband's family came from northeastern France. But not recently."

When we checked out of the hotel a day or two later, the concierge, an Austrian, called me "M. Roosh-ah." The cashier, a Frenchwoman, called me by my given name. She called me "M. Berton."

WE travelled to Nancy by train, one of the lunchtime trains—two and a half hours and four courses, with wine and coffee, in a formal restaurant car—that are understandably popular in France. During that speedy trip and leisurely meal, between the cold salmon and the raspberry torte, we reviewed what we knew and what we hoped to find. The facts, if they were facts, were few: Henri Constant Roueché was born on February 19, 1813. He came to America in the early eighteen-thirties. His reason for emigrating, according to family legend, was to avoid being forced into the priesthood. (That may explain the fact that I grew up a Presbyterian.) Henri Constant settled, probably by prearrangement, in western Pennsylvania, in a predominantly French hamlet called Guys Mills, near Meadville, the seat of Allegheny College. He was, or became, a blacksmith. There seem to have been other Rouechés of that trade in that area: a story, or legend, describes a Fourth of July celebration in Guys Mills in which several Roueché blacksmiths hammered out the "Anvil Chorus" from Verdi's "Il Trovatore" on "tuned" anvils. He married, on December 1, 1836, one Marie or Victoire (or, perhaps, Marie-Victoire) Richard, a union that produced eleven children, the sixth of whom, Louis Armand, was my grandfather. Henri Constant died on January 3, 1869. In the early nineteen-twenties, one of my parents' friends returned from a visit to France to report that he had noted in Nancy a Confiserie Roueché. Nothing else was known to us about the family that Henri Constant left behind in France.

The room clerk at the Grand Hôtel Concorde, into which we were booked in Nancy, was a young woman. I handed her a letter confirming our reservation. She gave it a glance and gave me a welcoming smile. "*Ah, oui*," she said. "*Bonjour, M. Roo-esch-uh*."

When the porter had shown us to our room and departed, I turned to Kay. " 'Roosh,' " I said. " 'Roo-esch.' 'Roosh-ah.' 'Roo-esch-uh.' I'm beginning to feel like an impostor."

"No," Kay said. "That's the fascinating part. If your Henri Constant had called himself 'Roosh' or 'Roo-esch,' or whatever, that's what we would be calling ourselves. Foreigners coming to America don't complicate their names. If anything, they simplify them—like your friend Stennis, whose great-grandfather's name was Stenhouse. Or they Anglicize them. We can be sure that Henri Constant brought that *accent aigu* with him. He certainly didn't pick it up in western Pennsylvania."

THE Grand Hôtel Concorde occupies a square, creamy sandstone building of three lofty stories that has housed a hotel of one name or another since around 1880 but was built, in the mid-eighteenth century, as a palace. It is one of seven former palaces, of identical rococo design, that face and bound the Place Stanislas, a three-acre rectangle of cobblestones and flowering planters in a checkerboard pattern, which is widely considered one of the most beautiful squares in the world. It was conceived by the last Duke of Lorraine—Stanislas Leszczynski (1677-1766), the deposed Stanislas I of Poland—as a home for himself and his court and as a tribute to his benefactor and son-in-law, Louis XV, and it was designed by the architect Emmanuel Héré. Its corners are embellished by gilded wrought-iron grilles and gateways (by Jean Lamour) and by classically figured fountains (by the sculptor Barthélémy Guibal). The Place was originally called the Place Royale, and its center, now marked by a monumental statue of Stanislas, was originally marked by a monumental statue of Louis XV. Four of the former palaces, alike in size and shape and elegance, face each other down the length of the Place, two of them (one the hotel and the other the municipal opera theatre) at the eastern end, and two (one of them the Musée des Beaux-Arts and the other a commercial building) at the western end. The former ducal palace, now the Hôtel de Ville, occupies the entire southern side of the Place, and two lesser but still palatial buildings on the north house sidewalk cafés, an Air France office, and a Crédit Lyonnais. A short street (Rue Héré) between these buildings leads by way of a triumphal arch to a companion square, the Place de la Carrière.

This much, or much of this, I knew, having learned it from reading before we arrived in Nancy. But now I was there. I was seeing it. Our room was a front room, and I opened the windows—a pair of tall French windows that gave on a little gilded wrought-iron balcony—and looked out at its beauty, at its architectural magnificence, at its magnificence of space and serenity. It gave me a curious feeling. This was a magnificence that Henri Constant must also have seen and felt. I wondered if I was feeling the beginning of a link.

IT was midafternoon, and a Sunday. There was nothing we could do but go out and see the sights. We walked down to the lobby on a wide, winding white marble staircase with a red carpet underfoot and a three-story crystal chandelier overhead. The concierge, a big man with a small, round face and little steel-rimmed glasses, took our key.

"*Bonjour, 'sieur et 'dame*," he said. "*Merci*. You are American, no?"

We said we were.

"I know many Americans," he said. "Here at the hotel and before. I was attach in the war to the army of Général Patton. I was interpreter. But you have, I think, a French name." He looked at a paper on his desk. "*Roo*-shay. M. *Roo*-shay. So I am Lucien. I am here to help you if I can."

We went out to the street and crossed to the enormous Place.

"*Roo*-shay," I said.

"It's an improvement," Kay said.

In the palace next to the Musée des Beaux-Arts, there was a café with tables on the sidewalk. We found a table and ordered coffee. It seemed to be a café for everybody. There were men and women of every age and every language and taste. A German couple two tables away were drinking beer when we sat down. I watched them finish their beers and order a round of cognac. Many of the young men wore narrow yellow neckties, and many of the older men wore sweaters under their jackets, with their neckties hanging outside. Most of the women, and some of the men, had vividly hennaed hair. Everyone seemed to be smoking. We drank our coffee and moved on. We visited the palatial Musée des Beaux-Arts and saw its enormous Rubens "Transfiguration," its excellent moderns, and, hidden away in a little room on the second floor, its one example of the work of its native son Claude Gellée dit le Lorrain. In the palace beyond the Musée was another crowded café. Children were playing a hopping game of some sort on the cobbled checkerboards of the Place. We crossed the Rue Héré and came to one of Barthélémy Guibal's fountains (cast in lead and depicting an ample Nereid and her retinue) and passed through one of Jean Lamour's gilded wrought-iron gateways. (Only, it isn't gilded. The gilt, we later learned, is gold leaf.) We followed a little girl

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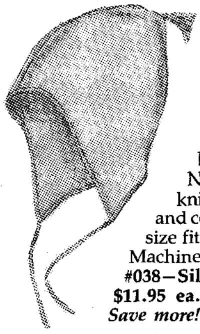

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on six-foot stilts into another Stanislas magnificence—the English park called La Pépinière. We walked the wide aisles of arching chestnuts and lindens and locusts that traverse its fifty-odd immaculate acres. We saw the circular garden of marigolds and begonias and ageratum and sage which resolved itself into a rainbow floral clock, and later learned from Lucien that the clock actually works —"*Il marche*." We saw, on the knoll just beyond the clock, the three huge floral butterflies—one green, one yellow, one red. We saw the usual clochard. We saw the statue of Claude Gellée by Rodin. We saw two pieces of litter. One was an empty Marlboro package. The other was a red-and-yellow McDonald's wrapper.

We left the Pépinière by way of the classically sculptured and colonnaded Hémicycle Général de Gaulle. ("Général de Gaulle is the special hero here," Lucien told me later. "It is the same with Jeanne d'Arc. She was born in this region, in the village of Domrémy. Général de Gaulle lived in his retirement in Colombey-les-Deux-Églises, which is also close by. The people of Nancy are very patriotic. It is because of so many wars.") The Hémicycle Général de Gaulle, like so much else in Nancy, is new only in name. It is another of the masterpieces that Stanislas commissioned from Héré. From the shadow of de Gaulle we stepped some centuries back, into the gray Gothic gloom of the Église Saint-Epvre. We stood there looking up at its fragile skyscraper spires—and the heavens opened in a thunder of bells. It was a shuddering, shattering agony of sound. It was impossible to stand and endure it. There was no escape but the church itself. We ran up the endless steps and through the gray stone portal and into an empty gray stone nave. The bells rang on, but the sound was suddenly different. It was softened now, and humanized, and its thunder had warmed to a jubilation. The nave was furnished with rows of the little rush-bottomed chairs that serve in France as pews. We sat down and caught our breath. The bells rang joyfully on and on, and died away in a falling echo. We sat for a moment longer, and then walked back up the nave and out. Out into sunlight. Out into Sunday peace and quiet. It was like coming out from shelter after a sudden storm.

Before we went to dinner that night, I had a belated thought. I opened the Nancy telephone directory,

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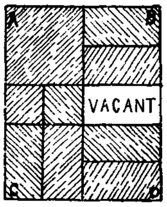

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and turned to the "R"s. There were no Roueches or Rouechés in Nancy. I turned to the back of the directory, to a supplement of suburban listings. I went from Agincourt to Laneuveville-Devant-Nancy to Saulxures-lès-Nancy to Seichamps. I came to Vandoeuvre, and my heart gave a jump: "Rouchy, J. P." It fell back. And then, at Villers-lès-Nancy, it jumped again: "Roucheff, A." And fell back even harder.

But that didn't affect my appetite. We dined at the Restaurant Stanislas on a salad garnished with pâté de foie gras and served with toasted slices of brioche, on roasted partridge with cabbage, on cheese (including a powerful Muenster) served with a little dish of ground cumin for seasoning, on mirabelle-plum sorbet. Our wine was an Alsatian Riesling, and our mineral water was from the springs at nearby Vittel. It was my introduction to the cuisine of my ancestors, and I made the most of it.

I HAD decided that our search should begin at the Mairie. The Mairie of Nancy is one of a number of government offices housed in the Stanislasian splendor of the Hôtel de Ville. We entered (on Lucien's recommendation) from the Place, the most splendid of the building's several entrances, and saw and mounted the magnificent branching stairway (by Héré), with its eighty-foot balustrade and handrail (cast by Lamour in a single convolution of wrought iron). We found the Mairie. The clerk on duty informed us with a smile of bureaucratic satisfaction that we had come to the wrong office. The appropriate office for our inquiry was the Archives de Meurthe-et-Moselle. And where would one find the departmental archives? On the Rue de la Monnaie. Where else?

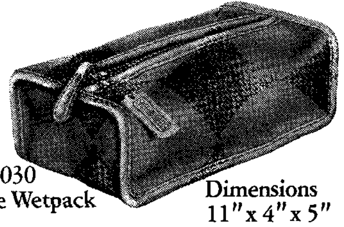
We went back to the Place. A passerby directed us to the Rue de la Monnaie. We found it just off a little square called La Fayette, inhabited by a towering equestrian statue of Jeanne d'Arc, somewhere behind the Musée des Beaux-Arts. The archives of the Département de Meurthe-et-Moselle were housed in a handsome building that had the familiar look of Héré. Mlle. Bernadette Adam, *secrétaire de documentation*, received us in a book-lined reading room. She was, like me, essentially monolingual. She and Kay conversed. Mlle. Adam looked vague, less vague, then interested. She gave me a serious look. She left the room and returned with an armful of books—three big, ledgerlike books bound in tan linen—and piled them on a vacant table. Beside them she placed a form: "*Nom et Prénoms . . . Nationalité . . . Objet des Recherches . . .*" I filled out the form, and turned to the books: "Table Décennale Naissances: 1823-1832." The two others were the birth records for the decades 1813-22 and 1803-12—Mlle. Adam had given Henri Constant a possible birth-span of thirty years. I sat down and opened "1803-12." The pages were of heavy, almost parchment, paper, and the names were written in a sweeping copperplate hand in ink faded to brown. The names were listed alphabetically by year. I turned to the "R"s of 1803. Kay looked over my shoulder. There were many "R" names, including many Richards, but no Roueché or Roueche, or even Rouche. It was the same for every succeeding year in volume "1803-12." It was also the same for "1813-22." Also for "1823-32," but I had given up hope long before that. I felt puzzled. I felt disappointed. I also felt somehow cheated. I stacked up the books. Kay and Mlle. Adam conversed. I waited.

Kay came back to the table. "Well," she said. "I don't know. These records don't really prove a whole lot. They speak only for Nancy. Mlle. Adam says our Henri Constant might very well have been born in one of the villages in the Nancy area. And the villages, the communes, all kept their own records. You remember what your brother said: If somebody in France or England, or wherever, asks where you come from, and you were actually born in a little place—like, say, Lone Jack—not far from Kansas City, you would probably say Kansas City. I think that's what Henri Constant did. He named the nearest town that somebody might have heard of."

I nodded. That sounded reasonable enough. But I also had a tempting flicker of hope. "About those villages," I said. "You say they all kept their own records. Why don't we look into that? Why don't we check them out?"

"We could," Kay said. "But it might take a little time. Mlle. Adam said there are quite a lot of them. Almost six hundred, in fact."

"WHERE comes the name of Nancy?" Jean-Pierre Zehnder said. M. Zehnder is an editor at the Nancy daily *Est Républicain*, and he has a good command of English. We



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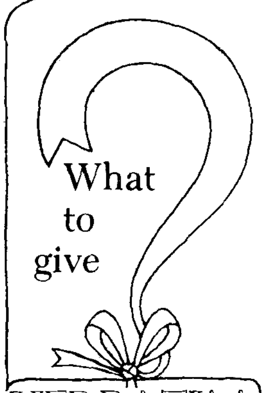

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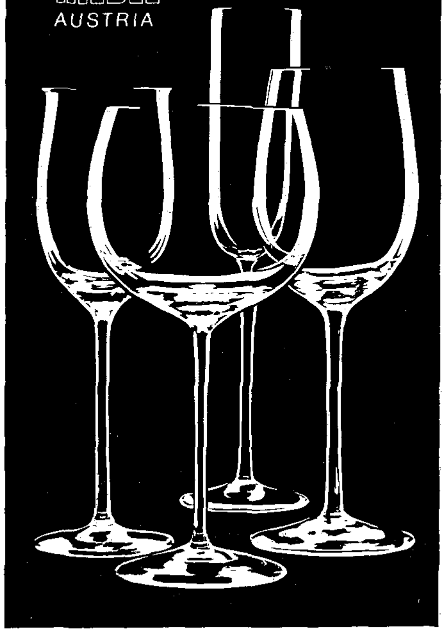

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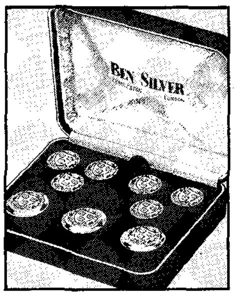

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were gathered in his office with a group of his colleagues. "The name, I think, is originally Latin. It comes from the name of a farm that was here in ancient times called Nanceiacum."

He turned to his colleagues and repeated my question in French. There was a moment of silence. Then one of them gave an explosive laugh. "*Bien sûr*," he said. "*Pour Nancy Reagan.*" I gathered that Nancy as a woman's name sounds strange to French ears. So, for that matter, does Lorraine. The French feel much the way an American would upon hearing of a French girl called Tulsa or Miami.

IT began to sprinkle. The Place was only a couple of blocks away. We began to hurry. We turned into the Rue Stanislas. It began to rain. We ducked under the awning of a pâtisserie. We looked in the window at the always dazzling spectacle of cookies and cakes and breads and rolls and tarts and tortes. Kay went in for a closer, more professional look. I stayed under the awning and watched the cars splash by and the umbrellas appear. The rain slackened, and then started up again. Kay came out eating a cherry tart and with a chocolate something for me that might have been designed by Cellini.

"I've just been talking to the nicest woman," she said. "Did you know that Nancy is the home of the macaroon? And that the madeleine was invented in a town not far from here? And another town, the famous Verdun, is the home of Jordan almonds? She said the pretzel is just as French as it is German. Of course, I knew about quiche Lorraine. But guess who brought the brioche as we know it to France? His name begins with S."

We climbed the stairs to the second floor of the sixteenth-century palace of the Dukes of Lorraine, which is now the Musée Historique Lorrain. We were looking for the room devoted to the work of the first of the region's native artists, Georges de La Tour. We passed a guard, and a reek of garlic and sweat and cigarette smoke. We came into a long room displaying the household artifacts, the costumes, the weapons, the trophies of the chase, the portraits, and the emphatic depictions of the military triumphs of the pre-Stanislas dukes. A stocky couple of late middle age were standing before a vast wall tapestry that showed in still rich colors a battle scene of rearing horses and waving banners and flashing swords and headless bodies. As we

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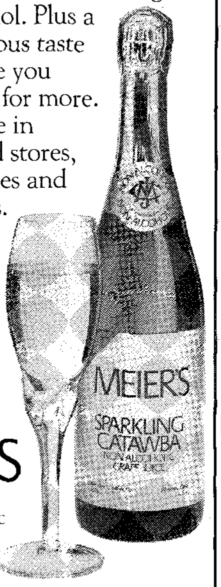

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approached, the woman said, "Ian! Please! The guard is watching. Do try to look interested."

The military are well served, well remembered, in Nancy. Lucien was right. I had this thrust upon me one day while I was studying a municipal street map. There is not only the Hémicycle Général de Gaulle and the giant statue of Jeanne d'Arc—as well as the Avenue Jeanne d'Arc, the Rue Jeanne d'Arc, and the Lycée Jeanne d'Arc—but also the Avenue Foch, the Rue du Maréchal Oudinot, the Boulevard Joffre, the Rue Maréchal Michel Ney, the Avenue du Général Mangin, the Avenue du Général Leclerc, the Rue Général Hoche, the Rue Lyautey, the Place Général Giraud, and the Rue du Général Drouot. There is also a statue (with campaign citations) of Général Drouot, a native son, in the Cours Léopold. There is a Rue Vauban, in celebration of the seventeenth-century military engineer whose chief fortress, Landau, fell, and a Place André Maginot, in memory of another fortress-builder. There is even another homage to Stanislas—the Porte Stanislas. I was pleased to find that Général de Gaulle and Jeanne d'Arc are not the only saviors of France whom Nancy had chosen to honor. There is also the Rue de l'Armée Patton.

WE shared a table at lunch at the Restaurant Muller ("Taverne Alsacienne") with a young French couple in jeans and an older Frenchman of indeterminate age in the ubiquitous navy-blue blazer. The couple were eating their first course—hors d'oeuvres that included tiny buttered radishes and slices of cold boiled ham thickly spread with butter—and the older man was drinking his apéritif. We sat and waited for a menu. The couple finished their hors d'oeuvres. The older man finished his Ricard. We still waited to order. The four of us sat and waited. And waited. The older man caught my eye. He rocked his head from side to side. He smiled an ironic smile. He nodded toward a distant waiter. He walked two fingers across the tablecloth—slowly, then slower, then even slower than that. He rolled his eyes toward heaven. He said, "*Oh, là là.*"

"YOU are learning about Stanislas?" Lucien said. I had stopped at his desk to leave a postcard (a view of the Place Stanislas) for mailing. "You have seen him in the Place, his statue? And the portraits in the Musée Historique Lorrain? You have seen how fat is his face, his chins, his *bedon*? He was a patron of the arts. Oh, yes. He gave us so much beauty. But he was also a patron of the pleasures. You cannot imagine how much Stanislas was eating—the meat, the chicken, the fish, everything. There is a square behind the hotel that you have maybe seen. It has now trees and flowers. It is a park. In the time of Stanislas, it was the garden for his vegetables. His weight? One hundred fifty kilos! Maybe more. He liked all good things. The women, the girls. You know his statue, how his finger is pointing? It is correct to say that he is pointing his finger to the Arc de Triomphe and the portrait there of Louis XV. But there is another story. This story tells that he is pointing to the Old Town, where those who wished found prostitutes."

I OPENED the door to the floor maid. She had my laundry. It was three shirts—perfectly laundered and faultlessly ironed—each wrapped like a gift in white tissue paper, and the

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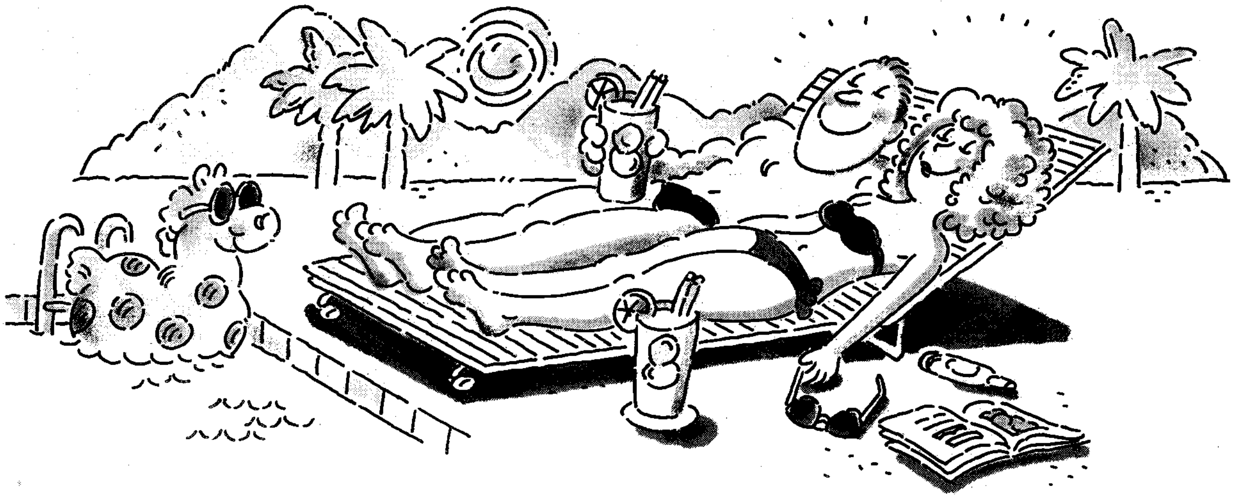

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three of them precisely stacked in a flat little brown wicker basket.

"I AM thinking since we talk before," Didier Hemardinquer said to me. "I am thinking about your ancestor." Hemardinquer—young, slight, blond, immaculate—is an English-speaking writer on the staff of the *Est Républicain* whom Kay and I had met through Jean-Pierre Zehnder. We were standing under the Arc de Triomphe, looking down the Place de la Carrière—a wide *allée* of overarching linden trees flanked by two rows of palatial three-story row houses by Héré. "I am thinking, if your ancestor lived in Nancy in the time you say, he would live in what we call the Old Town," Hemardinquer said. "I am thinking we will go there, and you will be seeing what he saw. Nancy in that time was not a big city. It was maybe thirty thousand people—one-fourth the size of now. The Old Town is here before Stanislas, and it is here the same today. This square, this Place de la Carrière, was here before Stanislas. It was first the jousting field of the early dukes. The Old Town goes back to the beginning. It is where Nancy began, in the eleventh century. We go this way, to behind the Arc. And here we are already in the Ville-Vieille. This street is now the beginning. It is the Grande Rue, the main street of the Old Town. It goes from here to the ancient city wall, to the Porte de la Craffe, five hundred fifty metres in distance."

We turned into a cobbled street just wide enough for two cars to pass. The sidewalks were hardly four feet wide, and the people walking there were walking single file. To walk abreast, the three of us walked with the traffic in the street. The buildings, too, were narrow, and they seemed to arch overhead. We passed a sign on a door: "Société Canine de l'Est." We passed a shop called Cactus, with a window full of granny dresses and faded Levi's and cowboy boots. The side streets were no more than alleys. We came out into a familiar square and the Gothic rise of the Église Saint-Epvre.

"Here is the Place de Saint-Epvre," Hemardinquer said. "Your ancestor would have known it well. It was in the Middle Ages the farmers' marketplace. But also there has always been here a church. The name is Latin. There is never such a word in French. There is never a 'p' and a 'v' together. We cross now to the palace of the first Dukes of Lorraine. Notice there are gargoyles. The palace is built for the Duke René II. René II is a hero of Nancy. There was a big battle here with Charles le Téméraire, the Duke of Burgundy, in 1477. '*Téméraire*' means reckless. He was killed by René II, and his body thrown into a pond where is now the Pépinière, after it had been half eaten by the wolves. Do you know the flower of Lorraine? It is the thistle. It was chosen by René II after the battle that saved Lorraine, and it has also a motto. It says, in English, 'Touch me not, I scratch.' The Old Town has known much war. Look across the street—that building on the Rue Saint-Michel. Look to the little tower on the corner. In the wall below the window—a cannonball. It is let stay there as a souvenir of the Thirty Years' War."

We passed "Antiquités." We passed "Blanc-Neige Blanchisserie." We passed "Centre Vidéo—Toutes Cartes de Crédit." We passed a street cleaner in orange overalls sweeping the street with a broom made out of a bundle of twigs. The Grande Rue came to an end at two tall conical towers with a passageway between them blazoned with the double-barred Cross of Lorraine. Hemardinquer raised a hand in the manner of Stanislas. "You are seeing the Porte de la Craffe," he said. "It is of the fourteenth century, and it is here that René II saved Lorraine. We turn now on the Rue Haut-Bourgeois. There are here many beautiful houses of the early eighteenth century. They were built for the nobles by Boffrand, the teacher of Héré."

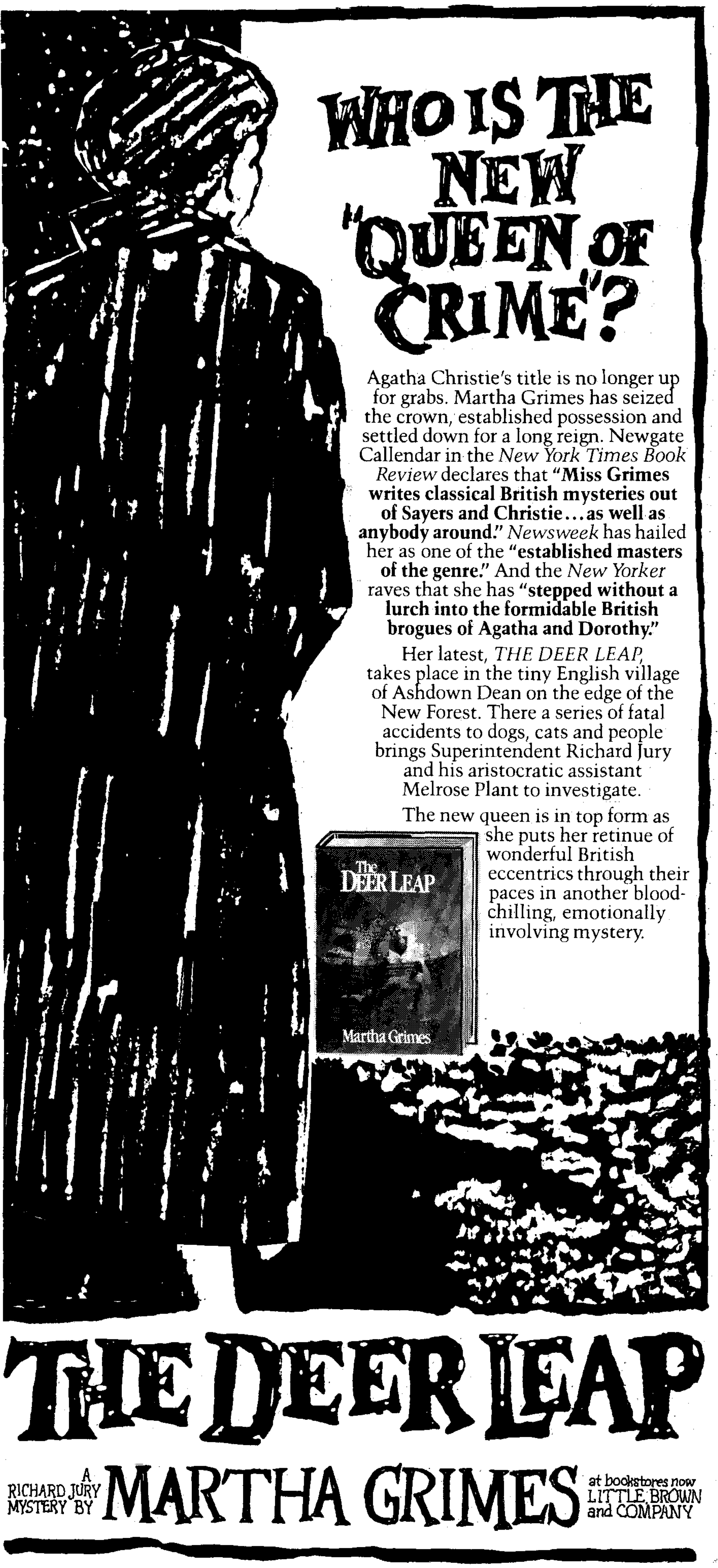
I said I supposed that was why it was called the Rue Haut-Bourgeois.

Hermandinquer smiled. "No," he said. "It is true that '*haut bourgeois*' means a social class. But there is also a different meaning—an older meaning, maybe. '*Bourgeois*' was the name of a river that ran down the center of the street, like a gutter. 'Haut' was above the gutter. Around the corner here is a street called Rue Petit-Bourgeois. It was below the gutter. And there is a beautiful house—the one with the open courtyard and the sculptured wolves on the gateposts. We are now on the Rue de Loup, and that is the Hôtel de Loup. It was the house of the Master of the Hunt under the Duke Léopold, the duke before Stanislas. It is by the great Boffrand. The next street now is the Rue de Guise. The Rue de Guise is where I live. I wish you to come now and see my wife and my son. And for tea. My house is also of the eighteenth century." He smiled and shook his head. "It is amusing. In the beginning, the Old Town was where everybody lived. Then came the nobles. Then, in the time of your ancestor, the Old Town was where the ordinary people lived. Then for maybe one hundred years it was the place where nobody wanted to live. Any place was better. Now it is again the place to live. It is fashionable."

ON our last night in Nancy, we dined at the Capucin Gourmand. It was a celebration of a sort, and the Capucin Gourmand is the most celebrated of Nancy's several celebrated restaurants. We hadn't found anything of any genealogical substance. But we had found something, and something, perhaps, that was more substantial. We had found Nancy, a Nancy wholly unexpected and delectable. And that was something, that was enough. The Capucin Gourmand is richly Nancien. Its décor reflects the inspirations of such artists as Émile Gallé, who made the École de Nancy the leader in France of the Art Nouveau movement. Its patrons are urged (in a menu note) not to smoke before they are served their coffee, and its most celebrated, and practically obligatory, dish is fresh foie gras au naturel. Its kitchen understands potée, the complicated Lorrainean cousin of choucroute. Its wine list is a hefty leather-bound book. The wines of Lorraine (red and white and "gray") are of local reputation only, but Nancy has neighbors of the highest distinction—Champagne, Alsace, and Burgundy. The glasses at the Capucin Gourmand are exquisitely of the region. They come from the crystal manufactory at the nearby village of Baccarat. Our dessert was also local. It was a rhubarb sorbet.

The night was bright with a waxing moon. We walked back to the hotel, and strolled for one last time around the Place Stanislas. The corner fountains splashed. There were rows of lighted windows in the reception rooms of the Hôtel de Ville. The opera theatre was alight and alive. I heard a whisper of music. I knew I had never seen a more beautiful square, and I thought it had never looked more beautiful. And I felt a kind of pride that it was here in Nancy.

—BERTON ROUECHÉ



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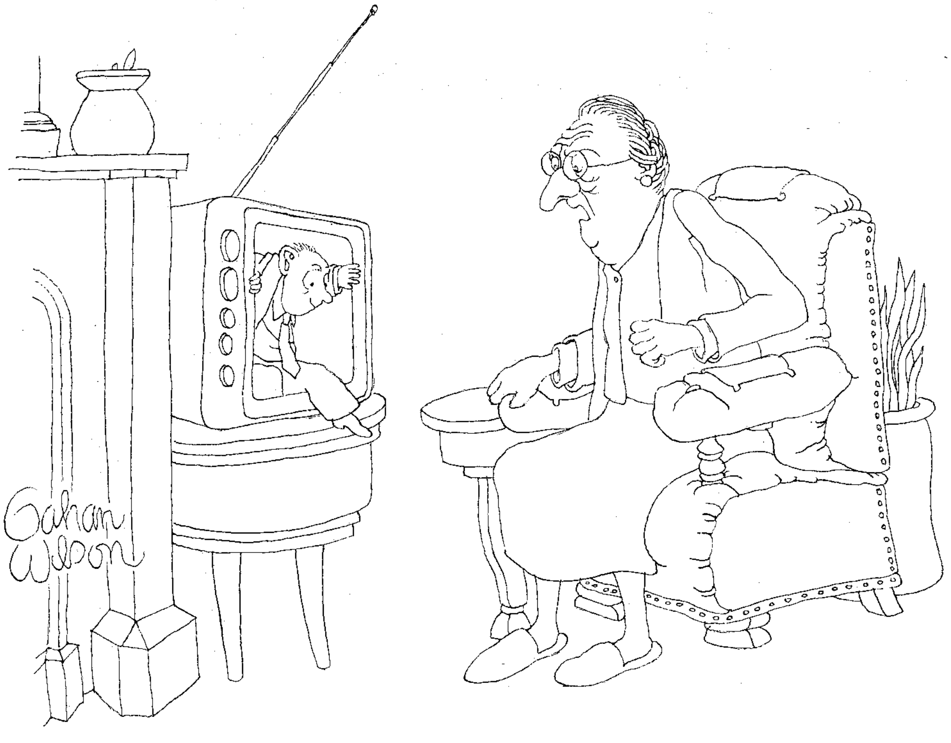
All thanks to Equity Library Theatre for its bountiful, charming revival of "She Loves Me" on its minuscule stage. The show has a real score, tuneful and sweet and varied, by Jerry Bock; real lyrics, nimble and witty, by Sheldon Harnick; and a real book, funny or tender as the occasion demands, by Joe Masteroff. Mr. Masteroff's book—adapted from a play by Miklos Laszlo that was also the basis, many long years ago, for a movie called "The Shop Around the Corner"—is set in a cosmetics shop, presumably in Budapest, in 1930. It tells the story of the shop's chief clerk and a young saleswoman there, who spend their working hours picking on each other and their after hours writing love letters to an unknown "dear friend." When I saw the original production, in 1963, it struck me as "one of those neat, tricky little plots whose surprises are surprising only to the characters and that seem to be put on earth for songs and dances." And now, it may be added, acting. Back in 1963, at the Eugene O'Neill, many of those concerned were deservedly famous; in 1985, on West 103rd Street, you may never have heard of anybody, yet everything in the production—singing, dancing, acting—is again exactly right, start to finish. My favorite performances are those of Roxann Parker, who is marvellously funny and attractive as a spinsterish saleswoman who has the misfortune to fall in love with the office playboy, and Lee Chew, who is humorous and grave and properly romantic as the chief clerk. But I admire Kenny Morris (older clerk), David Vogel (proprietor), Keith Herron (delivery boy), Todd Thurston (playboy), and Carolyn DeLany (heroine) almost as much. The perfect direction is by Robert Bridges; the perfect scenery and lighting are by Carl A. Baldasso and Tom Hennes, respectively; the perfect choreography is by Jamie Stiller. The perfect musical director is Paul Johnson, who, along with Edward C. Reichert, accompanies the show on piano. Walking out, I heard a woman say to her companion, "Well, I don't care what you call it—it's the best show I've seen this season." She had a point.

"Hamelin," at Circle in the Square (Downtown), a disagreeable little musical ostensibly set in the thirteenth century, actually takes place neither then nor now in that German town. The show is almost redeemed from time to time by the lively performance of Patrick Hamilton as the Piper. Singing and dancing and assuming a Scotch burr, he is almost bewitching enough to get rid of the rodents and the children and bring a glimmer of credibility to the proceedings, but not quite.

"Oliver Oliver," a production of the Manhattan Theatre Club at its new quarters, downstairs at City Center, is a very frail comedy by Paul Osborn, which came and went on Broadway fifty years ago. The action takes place in the nineteen-twenties, at the lavish country house of a woman named Constance Oakshot, whose style of life is unsupported by funds, and who is the mother of the idle dilettante of the title. She has invited for the weekend her rich "best friend," Judith Tiverton, and Mrs. Tiverton's marriageable daughter, an extremely practical young woman, without any illusions about her attractions, who has brought along a dull potential husband. The play becomes a struggle between the two elderly mothers—Mrs. Oakshot, who hopes to acquire Mrs. Tiverton's seemingly indifferent daughter for her own seemingly indifferent Oliver, and Mrs. Tiverton, outmaneuvering her at every step while remaining withdrawn from the fray. These roles are taken by Frances Sternhagen, twittering about as she tries to get her schemes aloft, and funny, grumpy Nancy Marchand, a pillar of boredom.

Both actresses are adept at comedy, but they seem out of place here, as does the dramatist himself, who is more at home in small-town America (where his "Morning's at Seven" was set) than in Philip Barry Land, among the wellborn, well-heeled, and bright-spoken. There is a scattering of amusing lines and situations in "Oliver Oliver," but not nearly enough of them. The supporting company, under Vivian Matalon's direction, does pretty well; Patricia Clarkson, as the down-to-earth daughter, does very well. The setting was designed by Tom Schwinn and lighted by Richard Nelson; the costumes were designed by Albert Wolsky. It might be mentioned, finally, that what this show needs is a curtain: Mr. Osborn has provided three unmistakable curtain lines for his three acts, and blotting them out on a suddenly darkened stage simply will not do. —Edith Oliver



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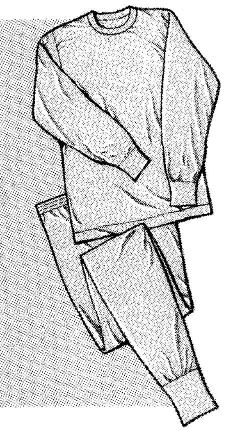

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Ladies'	2	4	6-8	10-12	14-16	18+

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Ladies'	24-26	27-29	30-32	33-35

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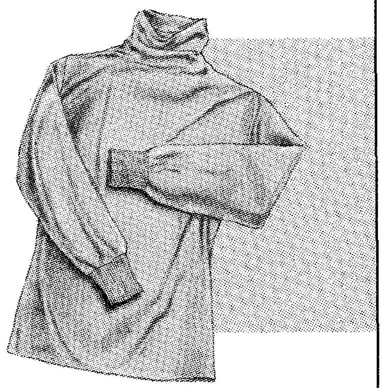

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Men's	30-32	34-36	38-40	42-44	46-48
Ladies'	4	6-8	10-12	14-16	18+

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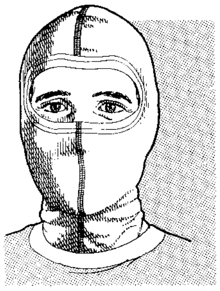

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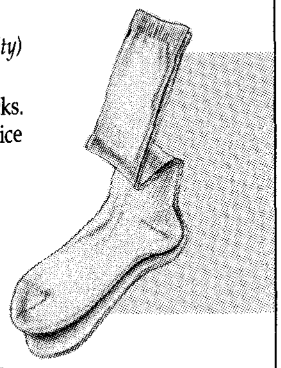

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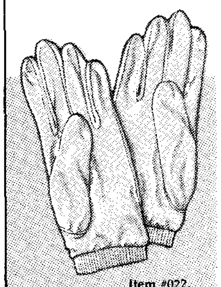
Ankle Height Silk Sock Liners: 1 for **$7.95/pr.**; 3 for **$7.50/pr.**; 6 for **$7.25/pr.**; 12 for **$6.95/pr.**

Mid-Calf Height Silk Liners: 1 for **$8.95/pr.**; 3 for **$8.50/pr.**; 6 for **$8.25/pr.**; 12 for **$7.95/pr.**

Sock Sizes	XS	S	M	L	XL
Men's Shoe	7	8	9-10	10½-11½	12-13
Ladies' Shoe	5½-6	6½-7	7½-8½	9-10½	11-11½



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XXS	XS	S	M	L	XL
4½-5	5½-6	6½-7	7½-8	8½-9	9½-10

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			#047 – Men's/Ladies' Featherweight Silk Turtlenecks	see above	
		Champagne	#022 – Men's/Ladies' Silk Glove Liners	see above	
		Champagne	#018 – Ankle Height Silk Sock Liners	see above	
		Champagne	#019 – Mid-Calf Silk Sock Liners	see above	
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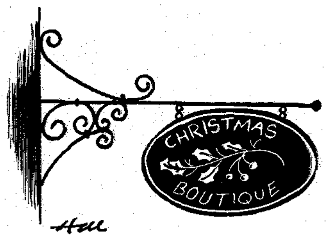
ON AND OFF THE AVENUE

GIFTS FOR THE HOUSE

JUST about everything for the home these days seems to be not only designed but self-consciously designed. This year, for example, the Pottery Barn is selling not merely black metal bookends but Italian-designed matte-black metal ones that have been given names. There is Arch, which looks like a miniature stoa, columns and all, and Sail, which is a right-angled triangle with a curved third side; $15 a pair. And the hot item of the year, the Michael Graves teakettle, was designed by the architect himself and manufactured by the design-conscious Italian firm Alessi. Graves has issued a statement about his kettle, which is a sleek, hand-polished, stainless-steel, two-litre, conical vessel with a removable little whistling red plastic bird on the spout: "The kettle is designed to have the character that one might find in a traditional kitchen. It does not try either to be overly sophisticated or to play on prosaic or utilitarian shapes. It establishes its playful character by its decoration and its simple massing." It boils water, and can be found for $70 at Macy's, Altman's, and Bloomingdale's, and also at Ad Hoc Housewares, 842 Lexington Avenue (64th); Dean & DeLuca, 121 Prince Street; D. F. Sanders, 386 West Broadway and 952 Madison Avenue (75th); Sointu, 20 East 69th Street; and selected Pottery Barns.



Over at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum (the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Design), at 2 East 91st Street, a splendid exhibit of Finnish glass is under way, and while you can't exactly buy the artifacts out from under the display cases, you can buy at the museum shop some of the designs on view, which are made by the iittala glassworks. The undulating free-form vase created in the nineteen-thirties by Alvar Aalto—it looks like an ice sculpture of a wave—is available in three sizes: three and three-quarters inches high, at $38; four and three-quarters inches, at $60; and six and a quarter inches, at $90. (It's stocked by the Museum of Modern Art's shop, too, and offered one size larger to boot: eight and three-quarters inches, at $150.) Many people who know about such things think of the late Tapio Wirkkala as the grandfather of Scandinavian design; he designed furniture, tools, wood-laminated sculpture, and even currency. His Ovalis vase, a clear, clean oval, dates from the nineteen-fifties and comes four inches tall ($30) and six and a quarter inches tall ($70). Glasses by Wirkkala include Viva, a strict, straight shape with three angled ribs along the sides, which comes in cordials (two for $15) and tumblers (two for $20); and Tapio, a shade curvy and with a bubble captured in the base, in cordials (two for $18), cocktail glasses (two for $25), champagne glasses (two for $30), and goblets (two for $30). You might be drawn, as we were, to the satisfyingly compact and graceful Aarne, a stemless, tapered wonder conceived by Göran Hongell in the forties: cordials (four for $35), cocktail glasses (four for $40), highball glasses (four for $50), and the beautiful champagne flutes (four for $45, and also available at MOMA).

Especially serious people might need a drink even before they fill the Italian hand-molded glasses—if glasses could talk, these would say, "We're silly"—that are sitting over in the Frank McIntosh shop, at Henri Bendel. Primary-color triangles splatter the sides; the Martini glass has a roughed-up greenish stem (to insure a secure grip?), and the champagne flute has a rough blue-gray stem. They're $45 each. Frank McIntosh has found the ultimate glass. It's from Spain and made from recycled Coke bottles—zing! It's got a flared rim and a chunky stem, and you know what color it is. The all-purpose size (sixteen ounces) costs $8, and the oversize model (a whopping twenty-eight ounces) is $12. Across the aisle at Bendel, in the Lee Bailey shop, you'll find pleasing, clear-glass Swedish flower jugs wishing to meet daisies or tulips. They look like squat milk bottles, come four, five, and seven inches high, and go for $22, $30, and $42, respectively.

We did a profound double take when we walked past Erika Lagerbielke's red, blue, and turquoise carafes in the new Orrefors Crystal Gallery, 58 East 57th Street, where most of the Swedish crystal on display is fairly staid and crystal clear, as it were. We were unexpectedly attracted to these bright bottles—they're entitled Confetti. We learned that, at twenty-five, Miss Lagerbielke is one of Orrefors' youngest designers, and that the process used in producing this kind of colored crystal—flashed crystal, it's called—involves combining molten colored crystal glass with molten clear crystal glass. The bottles cost $500 and $550, and are six and eight inches high. We were also partial to the flared, tailored, and quieter bowls of another Orrefors designer, Gunnar Cyrén; a small one, six and a half inches wide, is $250, and a large one, nine inches wide, is $325.

We ran across Erika Lagerbielke's bottles again at New Glass–Gallery Nilsson, 138 Wooster Street, where their impact was substantially diminished by all the other contemporary hand-blown colored crystal and art glass that surrounded them. New Glass sells Orrefors and Kosta Boda, but it prides itself on representing otherwise unspoken-for Scandinavian artisans and artists; the crystalline output of four small, independent glassworks is on display. One of them is Transjö, which is run by former master blowers at Kosta Boda and carries out the designs of Ann Wärff. Designs by Miss Wärff include lovely flare-rimmed rainbow bowls (six inches wide, for $60, and ten inches wide, for $101), which cast a multicolored shadow when they're illuminated from above; V-shaped (Martini-glass-shaped) goblets ($56), wineglasses ($64.50), and ten-inch bowls ($114.50) made of swirled translucent glass cut with rows of flowers and rimmed in black; and some handsome clear or blue bowls and plates ($49.50 for the small sizes, $112.50 for the large) with black or white blotches and swirls on the sides. New Glass also sells vases and bowls—in clear or smoky shades of green, blue-green, red, and white—by Ann Wåhlström, a local designer-glassblower, who works out of the New York Experimental Glass Workshop, on Mulberry Street. Some of Miss Wåhlström's designs have no function other than to look very beautiful; they run from $275 to $350. New Glass, by the way, occupies the ground floor of a loft and fills it with a curving display table, hanging lamps made of tiny halogen bulbs, and glass counters that are lit from below; it received this year's Annual Design Review Award from *Industrial Design* magazine for best interior design of a gallery.

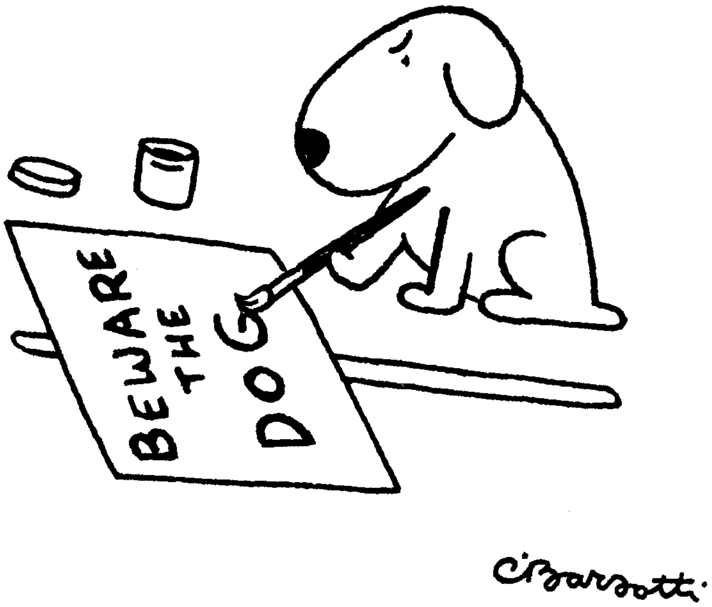
DO you know of a home office or a desk somewhere that could use a face-lift or some gentrifying? Well, those clever Italian designers are one step ahead of you. Marco Baldini, who designs for the Florentine firm of Edizioni & C., has created a beautiful black canvas desk blotter, with a tan leather border that can hold down loose papers. It measures about fifteen by twenty-one inches; $55. From Milan comes the Impatto 7, a table diary and appointment book set up with weekly double pages and a two-year planner, all in five languages. It's black vinyl, and seven by nine inches, and it costs $20. Another item for the desk—actually, it's lovely enough for a coffee table or a vanity—is a slim, tailored, flip-top pearwood box, twenty inches long; it is trimmed subtly in black rubber and was designed by Giorgio Pizzitutti, whose name we like to say aloud; $75. All these products can be had at MOMA. The Cooper-Hewitt Museum shop sells photo boxes made by the Edizioni & C. folks. If you'd like to rescue somebody's photographs or snapshots from a lifetime of plastic incarceration, these handmade, archive-calibre boxes covered in black book cloth would be just the thing. Each box houses a spiral-bound book with twenty-five removable black pages. There are four sizes, ranging from five and a half by seven and a half inches ($30) to fifteen by twelve inches ($65).

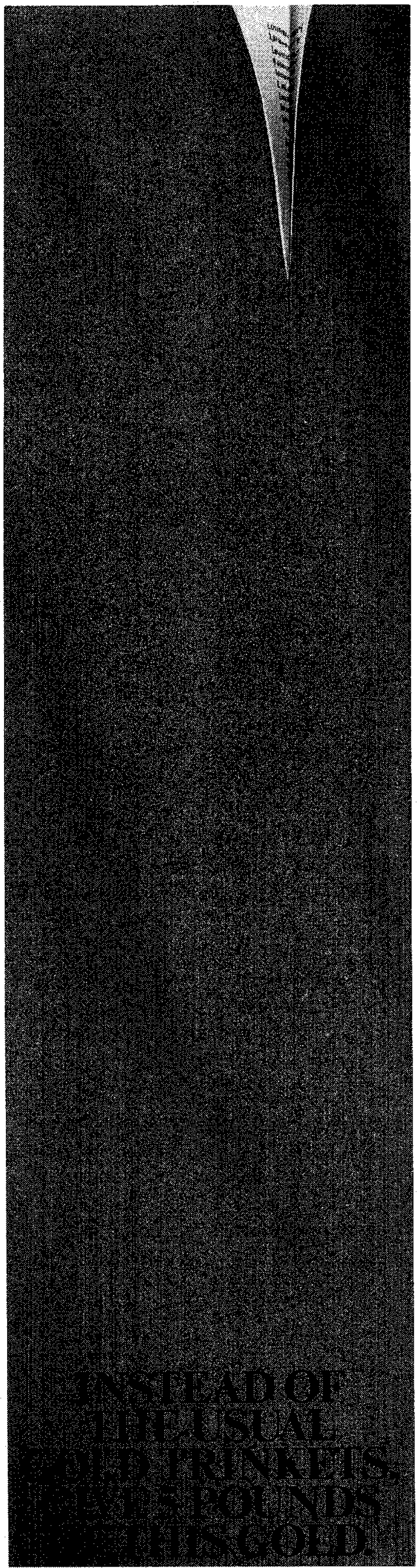
Our favorite museum desk calendars this year are "Water: The Museum of Modern Art Appointment Calendar 1986," because those of us in the Northeast are so sensitive about the lack of it at the moment, and the "Jazz Desk Calendar for 1986," the Matisse découpage entry from the Metropolitan Museum, because it's so downright cheerful. "Water" costs $10, and "Jazz" $6.95. We're also partial to MOMA's Jumping Point Wall Calendar, which has been a colorful museum-store staple in recent years. You punch out the black dots daily to expose the different-colored days of the month on the twenty-two-by-thirty-two-inch poster; $18. Not exactly calendars but attractive hangings for any wall are hand-embossed prints of nineteenth-century quilt patterns by Judy Severson, an artist from Belvedere, California. They run mostly twelve inches square, cost from $55 to $61, and reproduce quilt designs such as Tumbling Blocks, Rose Cross, Floral Wreath, Fruit Basket, and Schoolhouse II in subdued pastels, muted neutrals, or bright, deep colors. They're in the gift shop of the Museum of American Folk Art, 125 West 55th Street, and at the museum's two gift-shop annexes, at 610 Fifth Avenue (50th) and 55 West 53rd Street.

Back at the Lee Bailey shop, the only spot in Bendel where you can find burnless-wonder cookie sheets (they're $16 and made of double-ply aluminum), there are a few interesting items of the gadget variety. One is the Flexxx Phone, made by TeleQuest; it's a very light little apparatus—receiver, push buttons, and mouthpiece all in one, with an accordion-like midsection that can be bent at different angles to fit your mouth and ear. It comes in gray or white and plugs into any phone jack; $85. We are skeptical of pencil sharpeners that look well designed, but after trying out the manual Plus Pencil Sharpener we were so impressed that all we could say was "Oh, m'gosh!" Not just another pretty face, this workhorse high-tech off-white cube of an appliance has a non-skid bottom and, more important, an automatic feeder, which does the job while you're holding the whole thing down to turn the crank. You can use it during a power failure, or if your computer is down and you still own pencils; $15. Also useful but much less nuts-and-boltsy is a champagne recorker from France. Made of heavyweight stainless steel, it screws down on an opened bottle and looks a little like a small sculpture when it's not in use and just lying around; $22.

The Museum of Modern Art sells a dandy rectangular one-by-four-inch, ninety-nine-minute beeping electronic minitimer that can be mounted in the kitchen, the darkroom, or wherever, or carried around on one's belt loop, Dr. De Bakey style. It has a digital readout and three red buttons, and it beeps in black or white; $15. Speaking of beeps, the Beep 'n Keep Keyfinder might be just the thing for a household that habitually mislays its keys. Attach the small black plastic "miracle" (which is how it's described on the packaging) to a key ring, and within a thirty-foot radius a series of four evenly spaced handclaps, finger snaps, knocks, or tambourine shakes will set off electronic chirps that will lead its owner to the lost keys. We found it at Dextor & Company, 53 West 49th Street, in Rockefeller Center; $14.95. And back at MOMA there's possibly the world's best-looking flashlight—a Multi-Halogen Flashlight, designed by Udo Geissler and made in West Germany. Brighter than most flashlights, it features an extra-wide beam, a pencil beam for pinpointing at a distance, a flashing signal for use in cases of distress or warning, and a magnet (if your life is humdrum and you just want to keep it handy on the refrigerator). It's only five and three-quarters inches long, comes in black plastic, and costs $29.50.

The Pottery Barn has a Christmassy-looking item—a bright-red tin cannister that is actually a cookie-and-cracker crisper. It's called the Krispy Kan, and it costs $8.95. It will purportedly maintain a moisture-free environment provided you do the following: unscrew the glass knob—which, you may have noticed, is filled with little light-blue crystals—from the lid; put the knob in a four-hundred-to-five-hundred-degree





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oven for twenty minutes, so that the crystals turn bright blue; and when the knob cools screw it back onto the lid, and toss in your cookies. When the crystals turn pink, the process needs to be repeated. In another part of the store, you'll find an attractive white plastic, black-handled two-bottle wine chiller, the Insulated BYO, by Décor; $34.95. And, along with the Alessi kettle previously mentioned, one of the chicest things in the place is a New Wave-looking wall clock—although Gear, a new household-goods store, at 110 Seventh Avenue (17th), classifies it as Memphis. We also saw it at Lightforms, 168 Eighth Avenue (18th) and 450 Amsterdam Avenue (82nd). It costs $60; is about ten inches in diameter (Gear has a six-inch one, for $35); has a black face, a red arrow for a minute hand, a turquoise hour hand, and a squiggly yellow wire for a second hand; and, as is so common—perhaps it's the challenge of it all—has no numbers. One clock that will guarantee confusion is the Cosmic Clock, which, though it does have numbers, has a rotating face instead of rotating hands. If it's a quarter to three, three o'clock will have moved around toward the top, where a fixed Day-Glo-orange indicator needle points out the time; if you think it's about three and happen to look over on the right side of the face, which would be a perfectly natural thing to do, it will, of course, read six or so. This Italian plastic wall clock has a black face, white numbers, and a big hole in the middle, and it's got "Designer Elio Berlin" printed right there on the face, just so you'll know; $69, at Lightforms.

If we learned nothing else from the 1985 shopping season, we learned this: any item described as postmodernist, New Wave, Memphis, Retro, or contemporary probably won't match anything in anyone's house, but if it's fun and you like it, what the heck, go ahead and buy it. Conran's is selling some desk clocks from England of just that ilk. A five-inch-high U-shaped alarm clock is pink, blue, and yellow; $79. Another model is a ten-inch-high relief of a portico and columns, in yellow, red, blue, and bright green; $125. Sointu has a serious, well-designed (by Nicolai Canetti) eight-inch wall clock, the Disc Clock, in black with white hour and minute hands and a red second hand; $80. Sointu, by the way, has a canopy that reads "Harmony in Modern Design." Civilisation, a decorative-arts store and gallery at 78 Second Avenue (5th)—it's part of the East Village gallery boom of the last couple of years—doesn't have a canopy, but if it did it would probably read "Cacophony in Modern Design." Civilisation sells cartoony, optical-illusion, airbrush-painted acrylic desk and wall clocks by Steven Hall, in colors like purple and yellow ($60 and $80); and enamelled pinwheel-like wall clocks, designed by Eve Kaplan, with movable riveted parts and metal numbers that dangle from the faces ($80 to $120).

WHEN the snow's too deep for croquet, and if there's enough room in the house, playing pool is something a whole family can do together without anyone's even having to remove his Walkman. Blatt Billiards, an unpretentious establishment at 809 Broadway (12th), can supply a perfectly acceptable pool table—better than the kind you can get with Green Stamps—with a real, unwarpable slate top, four feet by eight (tournament size is four feet by nine), for $1,000, including delivery and installation in the New York City area. It's a Brunswick Bristol II, made of particleboard, wood veneer, and green felt, and it comes with four cues, fifteen balls plus a cue ball, a table brush, a rack, a bridge, and a box of chalk. Blatt has fancier models: an eight-foot Ebonite constructed of hardwoods and pine veneer ($1,800), a nine-foot Gandy made of stainless steel and black Formica ($2,700), a custom-built contemporary table in elm burl ($35,000), and the grandest table in the store—a baroque solid-cast-iron specimen filigreed to the hilt and dating from 1879 ($110,000). Traditionalist scorers might want wooden markers, too; a simple line of wooden marking beads strung on a metal wire does the job for $19.95, while a hardwood cabinet version goes for $135. At Blatt, you can also pick up English tournament dart boards made by Raven; they take up much less room and cost $45, including darts. And for the more energetic there's Foosball, a fast-paced (often frenetic-paced) indoor version of soccer; it's nonelectronic—there are knobs with which you control play manually. Blatt sells a version by Tournament Soccer, Ltd., housed in a fifty-five-by-twenty-nine-inch cabinet that stands thirty-four inches high; $500, local delivery included. Fosball, by the way, is reputed to exert an absolutely uncanny magnetic pull on ten-year-old boys the moment they enter a room with the game in it.

At-home diversions for the sedentary: The Cooper-Hewitt stocks a Furber Botanical Print Wooden Jigsaw Puzzle from England, adapted from eighteenth-century floral engravings by H. Fletcher. You can choose one of twelve different bouquets—one for each month—hand-cut into four hundred and seventy-five pieces. The completed puzzle measures nineteen by fourteen inches; $50. Two of MOMA's puzzles we like are the Museum of Modern Dog Puzzle, a funny eighteen-by-twenty-four-inch drawing in five hundred and fifty-one pieces ($10); and Puzzle Pieces, which confusingly depicts just that, in bright-colored pieces that ought to end up in a sixteen-by-twenty-inch finished state ($10). Potentially a source less of fun than of anguish is the Plan-A-Flex Home Designer, for the compulsive furniture rearranger on your list. It's a clever eighteen-by-twenty-four-inch Mylar-film floor plan with more than four hundred quarter-inch-scale vinyl architectural symbols for furniture, appliances, and fixtures. These stick, peel off, and restick easily—or, at least, more easily than moving the furniture around; $25, and also at MOMA. And, finally, we'll mention one of our own favorite pastimes, known as Dictionary or, sometimes, Fictionary, in which a group of players try to fool each other about the real definition of a proffered obscure word. All that's needed is a dictionary, and a more than adequate one (one we've actually heard people wax excited over) is Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary ($15.95), which came out a couple of years ago and probably ought to be in more houses anyway.

When the snow melts and it's garden season again, someone lucky enough to have a garden to celebrate it in might be very glad you'd stopped by Hammacher Schlemmer, 147 East 57th Street, to see about its rolling weeder, officially billed in the H.S. catalogue as "the World's Only Rolling Gardener's Seat." It's made of bright-red metal, rolls along on three rubber tires, and has a three-hundred-and-sixty-degree swivelling tractor seat eighteen inches off the ground. We had one of Brooklyn's foremost weed pullers test it out in the store, and she indicated that it would be great for those with bad knees and good backs; $69.95. We personally have our eye on what we like to think of as the ultimate anti-civilization, pro-hedonism device—a cotton-string hammock. After a considerable search, we came across a whole colorful slew of Yucatan string hammocks (they come solid-colored, two-toned, rainbow-hued, or natural) at Back from Guatemala, 306 East 6th Street; and a mail-order one (yellow, multicolored, or natural), in the catalogue of Smith & Hawken, 25 Corte Madera, Mill Valley, California 94941. A cotton-string hammock is very comfortable: because you lie *across* it—forming a human stretcher, as it were—it doesn't swallow you up the way other hammocks do. A wonderful way to experience nature or a spacious loft apartment. Back from Guatemala sells them in single ($45), double ($50), three-person ($70), and four-person ($90) sizes; and Smith & Hawken's is $49, plus postage. One of our favorite items for the yard or garden—for either chasing away (or pretending to) pesky critters, or just watching as it turns cheerfully in the wind—is a whirligig. You can send away for a handmade and brightly hand-painted wooden one from the Why Not? Company, 108 Tamalpais Road, Berkeley, California 94708. Why Not? manufactures whirligigs in the form of geese, ducks, chickens, penguins, roadrunners, flamingos, eagles, pheasants, and even dragons and soldiers, whose wings or arms are guaranteed to flap in the breeze. They cost from $30 to $40, plus postage.

AND now for something completely familiar: the white-earthenware-and-ovenproof-porcelain report. Dean & DeLuca has Italian earthenware in the form of very large, soft-edged and sculptured-looking rectangular, oval, and round platters ($30 to $50), and in the form of a compote, ten inches in diameter, sitting on a pedestal ($30). It has an English earthenware teapot, mammoth (twenty-cup) variety; $70. And, lastly, D. & D. sells Brooklyn-French ovenware—made by a Frenchman who lives in Brooklyn. Medium, large, and high-sided platters cost from $60 to $85. The Lee Bailey shop carries a nice large—nearly two-foot-long—ovenproof turkey platter ($40) and an even longer, but narrower, fish platter ($32). A sixteen-inch-wide, eight-inch-deep basin is $36. This is not the time to mention a shiny black porcelain standout of an oblong tart tray, seven inches by nineteen ($65), but it's too late to stop us. Shiny black casseroles and platters, looking just as handsome, are $80. Gear sells a pretty scalloped oval serving platter of white Italian earthenware for $30, and an attractive, useful, roomy—seventeen-by-twenty-one-inch—octagonal one for $35.

R. MacMillan

Wolfman-Gold & Good, 484 Broome Street and 142 East 73rd Street, is the Lewis and Clark of white restaurant-strength ceramics, be they French, Italian, Portuguese, or American. For several years, W.-G. & G. has been a primary source for the sturdy, pleasing pitchers, bowls, and teapots made at the eleven-acre East Liverpool, Ohio, plant of Hall China. The pitchers come in four styles: Streamline, somehow circular *and* angular; Aristocrat, squared-off and Art Deco-like; Doughnut, built of concentric circles; and Ball, round, bulging, and a frequenter of waitress stations in truck stops for years. They cost from $22.50 to $25. Hall's compact, rounded Rhythm teapot—its curved parallel lines make it look aerodynamic as well as kinetic—costs $32, and Hall bowls range in size from tiny to eight-quart, and in price from $4 to $37.50. In addition to white, most of these items come in three colors: black, gray, and—we report this with great difficulty—metallic gold. We admired two spectacular Italian tureens, one trimmed with squashes on the cover handle and around the edges of the accompanying platter, the other with shellfish; $175 and $200.

We like Dean & DeLuca's rustic terra-cotta dinnerware from Italy as much as we like pasta-e-fagioli soup, which is a lot. Glazed in a beautiful, clear true-green wash with dark green painted subtly around the edges, it consists of dinner and luncheon plates, soup bowls, pasta bowls, large (eight-quart) serving bowls, humongous (fourteen-quart) serving bowls, and coffee mugs; from $6 to $80. More warmth and rusticity, in the form of mustard-colored Alsatian dinnerware with brown trim, runs $5 for a soup bowl, $8 for a luncheon plate, and $12 for a dinner plate or a cup (French size) and saucer. D. & D. is still carrying spiffy cobalt-blue Viking glass tableware from West Virginia, in the form of plates, bowls, serving bowls, and platters; from $12 to $36. If you're shopping for a simple but smart, big-city-looking, useful set of dishes, visit Ad Hoc Housewares and ask to see Saturn, a new china pattern from Sasaki. The off-white, semi-translucent dishes have a textural design—concentric rings, hence Saturn—and are nicely lightweight, and the cup handles are flat, wide, and especially comfortable to hold; $100 for a five-piece place setting for four.

We always feel serene when we eat Japanese food. There's an extensive and reasonably priced selection of sushi and tempura servers and tableware on display at Broadway Panhandler, 520 Broadway (Spring Street)—the only place, we might add, where we saw an aluminum cake pan in the shape of a guitar. Traditional red-and-black lacquered bowls and platters, round, square, and fan-shaped, lie alongside green-and-beige and mustard-and-green stoneware; you can get nearly everything, from a pickle dish to a chopsticks rest—or even chopsticks—to large (twenty-inch) platters. Prices range from $1.50 to $40.

Wow! Look at those circles! See that dash! What a square! And those bars! Those dots! That bright, wigged-out geometry floating around on a teapot, or a teacup and saucer, or a demitasse cup and saucer! Is it postmodernist? Avant-garde? New Wave? Futurist? Punk? Pop? Memphis? Retro? Well, actually, Petro might be more like it, since we're referring to the MOMA reproductions of Russian Suprematist porcelain, seventy years old and not looking a day over last week. Made nowadays in Portugal, after original, pre-Revolutionary designs by Nikolai Suetin for the Petrograd Porcelain Factory, the demitasse set (offered for the first time) costs $30; two teacups are $30 and two saucers $20; and the teapot is $60.

The Suprematists lived in a time of revolution, and we, of course, are living in the age of entertainment. The Suprematists believed in revolutionary, non-objective art, their aim being "to liberate art from the ballast of the representational world," in the words of Suprematism's founder, Kazimir Malevich. Today's designers are liberating design from the bastion of architecture and offering it up as a form of popular entertainment. "Designers just want to have fun," we can imagine them saying. The Swid Powell line of tableware, which is designed by the current crop of up-to-date architects, is known for its entertainment value and can be found at places like Frank McIntosh, Bloomingdale's, Ad Hoc Housewares, and D. F. Sanders. Swid Powell plates (mostly twelve-inch buffet size; luncheon plates and cups and saucers are available in a few styles only) are decaled, glazed, and fired in Japan (they're dishwasher-safe), and they're so striking that they might be accused of being too competitive with the food they're supposed to be holding—on the other hand, it's like *dinner and a show all in your plate*. One of them, Miami Beach, was designed by Laurinda Spear, whose Arquitectonica firm was responsible for one of the assertive new buildings—the Atlantis, a condominium with a square hole through it—seen in the opening credits of "Miami Vice," the cops-and-robbers, design-and-violence TV series. Steven Holl, a New York architect, has done three new plates: Volumetric, which has pyramids, cones, cylinders, and the like dancing on an aqua border around a plain white center ($65); Linear, a white plate with green and blue thread-thin circles, squiggles, and parallel lines around the rim ($65); and Planar, an aqua center encased in a black rim decorated with peach, gray, turquoise, and lavender squiggles, rectangles, and other fanciful shapes ($80). Javier Bellosillo, a Spanish architect in his thirties, has come up with two plates: Ruin has a painterly, if whimsical, two-tone-blue crack running through the center of its peach- and sand-colored sections, and is a big seller in California ($75); Figure is light blue and vaguely blueprint-looking, with a peach-colored shaft running through the center, and is a big seller in the East ($90). Enter Hans Hollein's Kaleidoscope, which is not as kaleidoscopic as you might think; it's got relatively tame light-gray and light-blue dashes sprinkled profusely on three sections of the white background ($60). And Richard Meier's Signature verges on the reactionary, it's so simple and unoutlandish: a white plate has two thin black (or red) lines intersecting at ninety degrees ($45), and the design looks especially nice in a cup and saucer, where a line going down the side of the cup satisfyingly meets up with the line on the saucer ($32).

GIFT
WRAPPING

"WE don't care what people call our designs," says Judith Stiles, of Harris & Stiles, Hand-Made Ceramics, 16 Hudson Street, just across the street from the Jazz Hall of Fame. "Memphis, New Wave, punk, postmodernist, avant-garde, Futurist, Pop, Art Deco—it doesn't matter. People respond to color." And color is exactly what one is struck by upon entering this storefront, or even just passing the windows. Pastels predominate—pink, rose, salmon, aqua, lavender—in the vases, bowls, plates, platters, boxes, dishes, tiles, and lamps, but turquoise, purple, cobalt, black, and gray are also used in the various abstract designs, which are achieved by means of airbrushing, hand-painting, masking techniques, and smudges created by mixing certain ceramic glazes with Elmer's Glue-All. Harris & Stiles started up nearly five years ago, when Barbara Harris and Judith Stiles realized they couldn't buy the kind of ceramic tiles they had envisioned for their loft; so, of course—what else do you do if you're a downtown artist living in a loft?—they began making tiles themselves. They now employ a work force of five. "We buy up metallic oxides—copper, nickel, and titanium oxides—and cobalt carbonates in bulk," Miss Stiles explains. "They look like gravel when we get them, but then we grind 'em up and find new colors." Harris & Stiles sells platters in unusual shapes, too. One round twenty-two-inch platter was molded on top of a pillow, and looks it, with its irregular rim and Gaudiesque, semi-alive quality; $250. A similarly organic fourteen-inch-square platter is

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$100. These are one-of-a-kind items. The basic inventory includes a large urn, eighteen inches high ($250); a bubble vase, eleven inches high ($200); a jardiniere vase, ten and a half inches high ($120); a cylinder vase, ten and a half inches high ($70); and two triangle vases, eleven inches ($100) and six and a half inches high ($36). There are bread trays, triangle plates (which make for interesting dinnerware), oval vases, fishbowl vases, candlesticks, and even mugs, and the prices range from $10 for the mugs to $48 for the bread tray or a triangle plate, and on to $100 for a giant coffeepot ("We like coffee a lot," Miss Stiles admits) and $200 for lamps made from the large vases, complete with fixtures and lacquered paper shades.

The Tao-te-ching says, "We turn clay to make a vessel but it is on the space where there is nothing that the usefulness of the vessel depends." This quotation is printed on a little brown card placed next to a display of Volume Containers—high-fired, unglazed, strangely velvety-to-the-touch, vaselike but openingless objects from five to nine inches tall and costing from $60 to $90. They're made by Marek and Lanie Cecula, a husband-and-wife ceramic-artist team, who run Contemporary Porcelain, 105 Sullivan Street. When they began their business, nine years ago, the Ceculas lived and worked here, but now they've remodelled the space into an attractive retail store and gallery with turquoise linoleum tiles on the floor and black perforated-metal cubes, triangles, and shelving to hold the porcelain bowls, plates, teapots, and sake and sushi sets. The Ceculas—they're ceramicists, not potters, and not one iota artsy-craftsy—are intensely serious about their work, which ranges from one-of-a-kind objects to inventory pieces; a lot of it ends up in Neiman-Marcus. We are partial to their playful, angular decorative teapots, glazed in shiny white, with green, turquoise, blue, yellow, pink, black, and red geometric decals and silk-screened computer-grid-graphic designs applied by hand. They're intended less for functional than for visual enjoyment; $400. Graphic Sphere round vases (usable as vases) are bright and playful, too; prices range from $80 for one six inches high to $160 for one fourteen inches high. Dinnerware, similarly geometrically decorated, runs from $25 for a dinner plate or a soup bowl to $60 for a serving bowl. Those who

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know the Ceculas' work are probably most familiar with their rice bowls, which have an off-white matte glaze, a rough-edged blue-gray rim, and two sets of indentations in the rim to keep chopsticks from rolling off. They come in three widths: five and a half inches ($22), eight inches ($26), and twelve inches ($60). The Ceculas have also come up with an elegant high-gloss, compactly designed sake set ($200) and tea set ($250) that have clearly been influenced by traditional Japanese ceramics but are so innovative—the sake server, for example, is low-slung and bowl-shaped, and the whole set embodies geometry's greatest hits, the circle, the square, and the triangle, while the tea set's tray has little hollows to set the round-bottomed cups in—that we think they might find their way into the design collection of a museum very soon.

Scott McDowell doesn't care if you call him a ceramicist or a potter, but he thinks of himself as what the Japanese call a *togei-ka*—an artist potter. A couple of days a week, when he's not throwing or painting or firing, he operates a little store at 246 West 18th Street, complete with a refreshingly exurban turquoise-painted screen door. His plates, bowls, vases, cups, and teapots are all made by hand, and he describes his shapes and glaze patterns as "contemporary." At the moment, he's into pink, metallic-gold (he brings it off), and mother-of-pearl iridescent glazes, and he also uses blacks, reds, bright yellows, and aquas liberally. His designs can consist of parallel lines, blotches, smudges, dashes, dots, concentric circles—just about anything. What's constant is his taste; his stuff may be slightly offbeat, but it's far from outrageous. The prices range from $16 for an eight-ounce drinking cup to $100 for a large bowl or vase.

Outrageous, certainly outlandish, might be a good way to describe the strangeware that Carol Richman comes up with. Her out-there coffeepots and teapots—she calls them "semi-functional sculpture," and it might be chancy to try to actually use them—look exactly like something out of some obscure Greek myth in which an angered Zeus turns bright-colored, terrified chickens to stone; $250 to $500. Miss Richman is one of seven women potters who make up Downtown Potters' Hall, a coöperative at 113 Mercer Street. The rest of the represented work is considerably closer to earth. Jan Burtz makes pastel-glazed plates, cups, and teapots; Roxy

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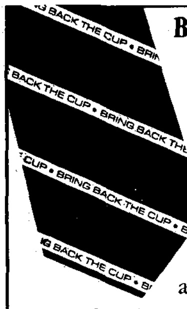
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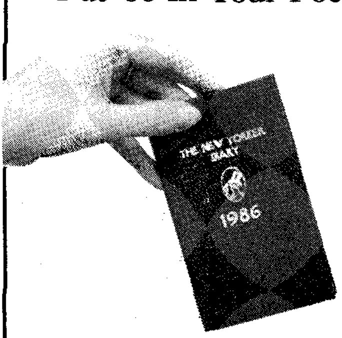

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Wright Weil makes hand-painted stoneware and flying-fish wall hangings; Linda Marks makes vases, bowls, and platters in a blue-and-white radial design; Barbara Cahn's platters, bowls, and vases are built of inlaid colored clays; Janis D. Schneider, the romantic of the bunch, paints delicate little flowers on tableware, pitchers, and tureens; and Sylvia Finkle works porcelain in two styles—incised, and hand-painted New Wave. Prices begin at about $10 and go up to $100 or so.

Civilisation, a friendly store behind a wavy fuchsia front-door pull, sells witty, imaginative, funny, and occasionally disquieting work by several New York ceramicists. Christina Salusti's cups and saucers have a definite post-R.-Crumb-and-Red-Grooms quality. They are woozily conical and are painted pink, with turquoise, green, and orange trim, and the insides of the cups are either peach or aqua; $25. For Tina Stronach, butter dishes must have as many possibilities as, say, the theatre. Their glazed white lids serve as a stage for full-color mini-tableaux of beach scenes (palm trees, sunbathers, scuba divers) or of a family around a dinner table or of a cityscape; $50. Jerry Janosco's bright oval platters are mildly menacing—they've got knives lying on them as part of the ceramic design; $190 to $290. It's no surprise that Nina Talbot teaches ceramics to elementary-school children; her playful, vividly colored stuff makes you think that her main influence is recess. Her Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner plates are painted with clock faces that read nine o'clock, twelve noon, and six o'clock; $25. She makes mugs that seem to waver on their pedestals; $20. And she has fashioned what she calls a City Birdhouse, a cheerful ceramic bandshell-like structure that shelters several different animals; $150. Jennifer Ley's platters and bowls have daffy scenes of the Southwest or the tropics painted on them in pinks and beiges and other desert colors. One scene features a sexy blond sunbather, and another looks like a still from a "Road Runner" cartoon; $90 to $110. Her work is also available at the Incorporated Gallery, 1200 Madison Avenue (88th).

OVER in the Gallery at Workbench, 470 Park Avenue South (32nd), which displays and sells one-of-a-kind pieces of furniture and experimental accessories for the house, things aren't very sombre, either, but

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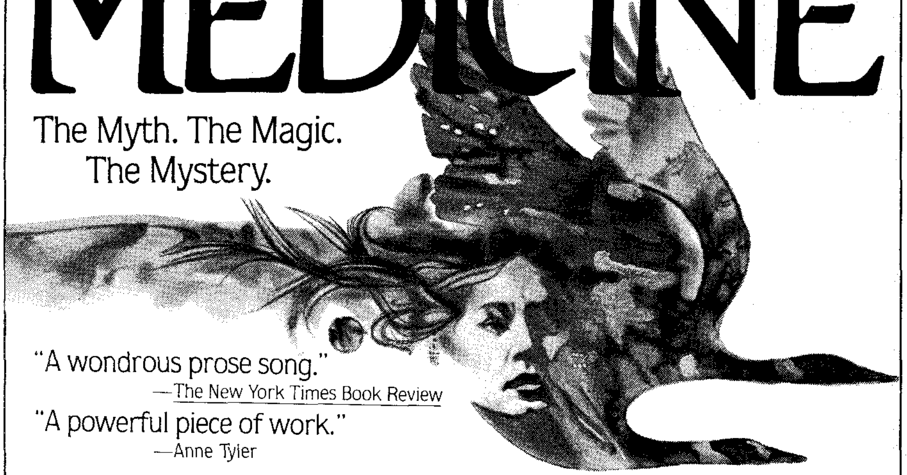

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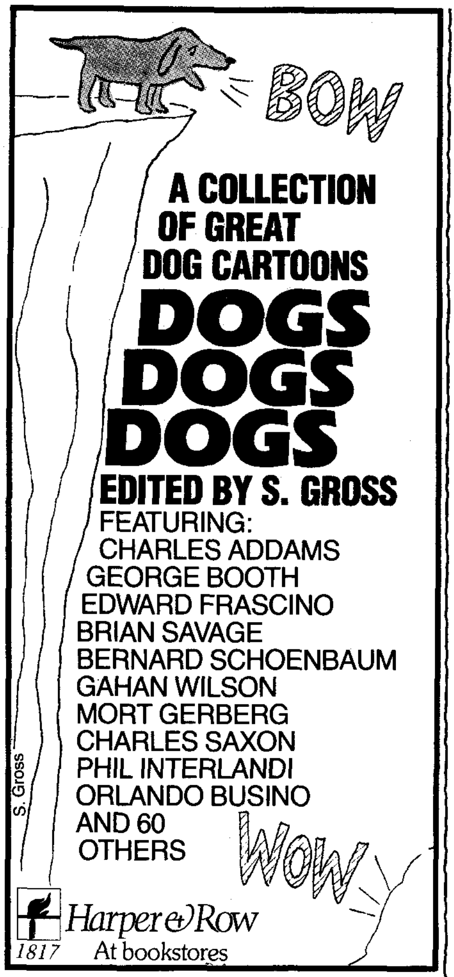

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you'd think they would be. The current exhibit is billed as "major statements by major contemporary furniture-makers" and includes work—major wisecracks translated into home furnishings—by Paul Sasso, a professor of art (or perhaps comedy) somewhere in Kentucky. Mr. Sasso is responsible for at least two funny pieces: the Ou-La-La Lamp ("This is for every lady that has worn a hat," the brochure declares), which looks like an oscillating cartoon fan and is constructed of walnut, cherry, and poplar—but not so you'd ever notice, because it's painted in lavender, cobalt-blue, red, and airbrushed-turquoise acrylics—and costs $800; and the Primping Station ("Warning: Please wear sunglasses while viewing this piece"), a wall-mirror-and-three-drawer shelf system painted in pink, green, and metallic leopard-skin-print acrylics, which you could present someone with for $1,000. Other furniture-makers in the show are considerably more serious. James Sagui, from Massachusetts, builds graceful pieces, including a rosewood writing table ($3,350), a bench/coffee table available in either high-polished purpleheart (a South American hardwood) or curly maple ($1,300), and a tall, narrow, asymmetrical cabinet of pearwood and ebonized walnut ($5,700). Mr. Sagui has his whimsical moments: a freestanding shelving system with the shelves painted cornflower blue, coral, and fuchsia is closer to a piece of sculpture than to a bookcase ($2,700); and his Red Step side table, which is built of cherry underneath its fifteen coats of bright-red lacquer, has legs that have been jigsawed into a ziggurat pattern ($1,250). Rick Wrigley, another Massachusetts furniture-maker, has been influenced, we are told, by Piranesi. He uses inlaid wood, for grid and checkerboard effects, and classical architectonic devices (his table legs look like Greek columns) in an assortment of tables; $975 to $1,875.

Oops (Originals on Permanent Sale), 528 LaGuardia Place, almost always has representative pieces—chairs, settees, and tables (either showroom floor samples or overstocked, slightly damaged, or out-of-print merchandise)—by Alvar Aalto, Josef Hoffmann, and other twentieth-century titans, which are usually available only through architects and designers, at a fifty-per-cent (or more) price reduction. Chairs and rugs by contemporary designers—leather chairs by Mario Bellini, of Milan, and chevron-shaped, polka-dotted rugs about four feet wide by Elizabeth Browning Jackson, of Tribeca—were on hand when we stopped by. The chairs range from $540 to $780; the rugs are $185 and $270. And a shipment of Le Corbusier—his tubular-framed leather chairs and sofas ($1,715 to $4,172), and his 1928 leather chaise ($1,737, and a collector's item), which is supported by a near-semicircular tubular frame and which we recently noticed in a rock video—was expected any day. As always in this amicable store, supplies are limited and fairly unpredictable.

Modern Age, 795 Broadway (11th), has its very own exhibit of geometric abstract art in the colorful form of all-wool rugs designed by Christine Van der Hurd. Five different patterns are available in limited editions; a three-by-six-foot rug is $1,250, and a six-by-nine is $2,750, with custom-order, one-of-a-kind designs available at higher prices. Modern Age also has a whole line of Italian-manufactured, seemingly indestructibly glossy, polyester-lacquered tables, chests, and storage units, up-to-dately sleek but understated enough so that you probably won't want to pitch any of them out in five years. A drop-leaf oval table opens to forty-eight inches by sixty-five, comes in black or daring turquoise, and costs $1,800; and a boxlike black end table has four drawers, scoots around on wheels when necessary, stands twenty-five inches high and is otherwise twenty-six inches square, and goes for $875. Other pieces include a bar/stereo stand (depending on the owner's pleasure) and an array of chests and shelving that could be combined to make a shiny black wall unit. We really liked an Italian mirror ($250 for a thirty-inch oval, $350 for a forty-inch oval) that has its top fifth tilted slightly forward, like the open windows on the F train or the mirror over the bar at Bradley's—if you stand close enough you can see whether your shoes need tying. A beautiful, ingenious folding corner dressing mirror ($1,710) also comes from Italy; it's made of rosewood, and consists of three narrow mirrors and two storage compartments that are cleverly built into the folding panels. Modern Age thinks it has The Chair: it's the Orbita Italian (what else?) black metal side chair, and it features

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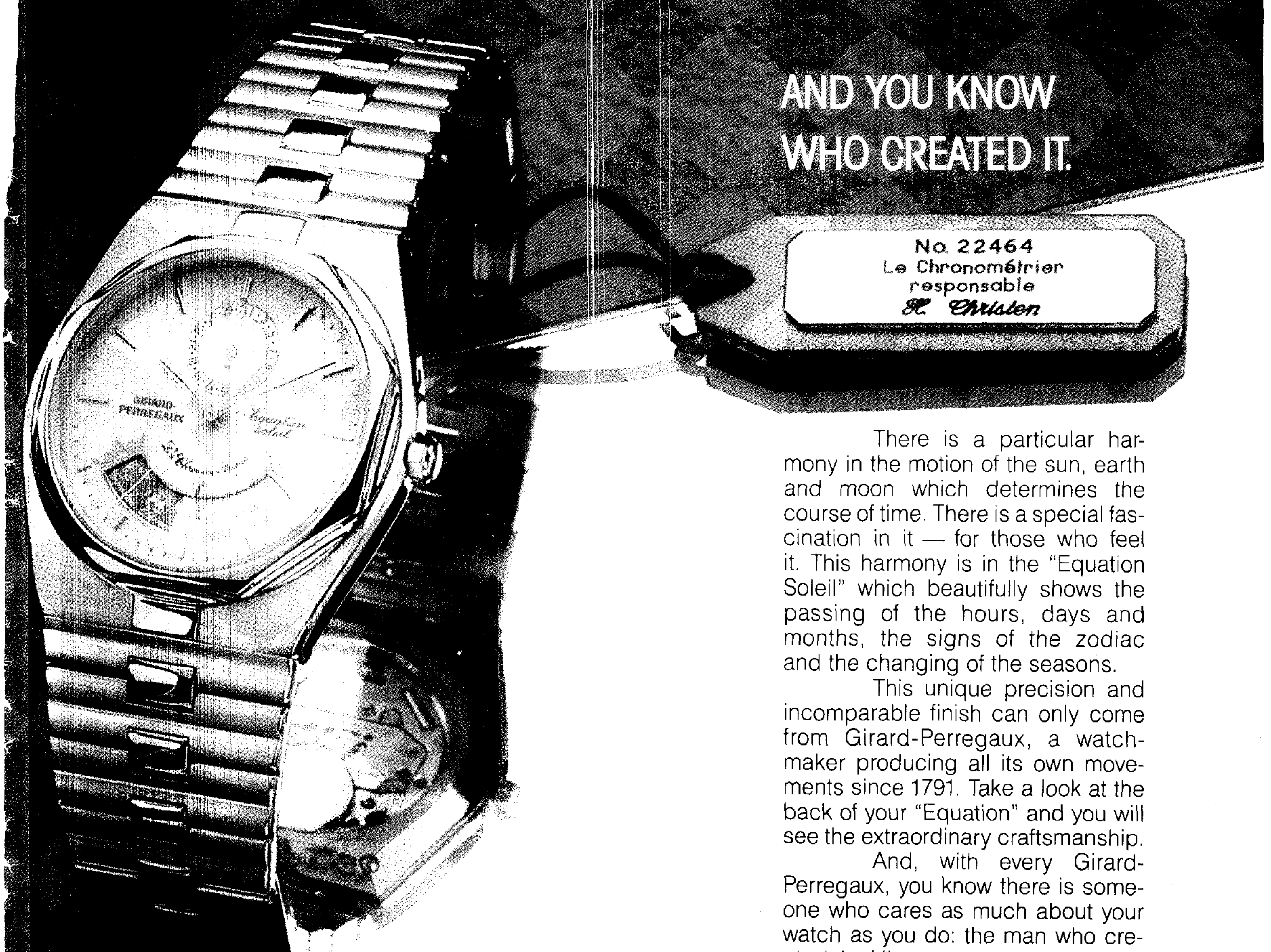

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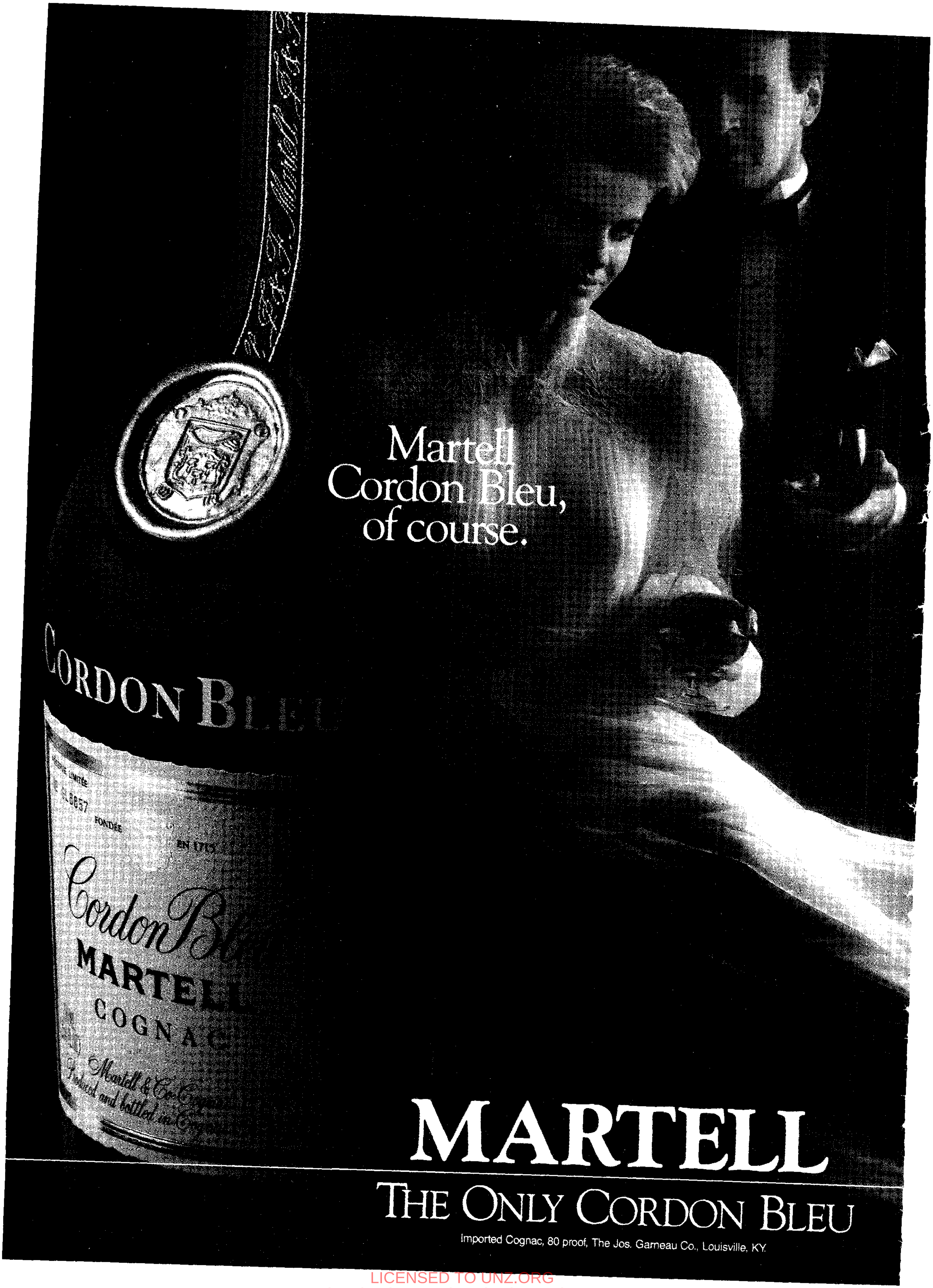
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rectilinearness (in its thin back spokes and leg detail), roundness (in its painted plywood seat), and, thank heaven, color (the seat comes in robin's-egg blue, lavender, red, green, or yellow); $275.

Meanwhile, Furniture of the Twentieth Century, 227 West 17th Street, thinks *it* has The Chair. This one, an Italian side chair called Tonietta, has graceful shiny aluminum legs and a leather-upholstered round seat and back in black, white, and other neutrals, and in red, yellow, or blue; $450. Furniture of the Twentieth Century also has a large and impressive selection of wool rugs, mostly of the floating-geometry school, designed by Eileen Gray, Ettore Sottsass (the Milanese who reportedly found the name for the Memphis design group while sitting around one night listening to Bob Dylan's "Memphis Blues Again"), Philippe Starck (a hot young French designer), the graffitist Keith Haring, and others; the rugs range from $1,050 to $9,500. We took note of three lamps by Matteo Thun which are constructed of perforated painted metal (they made us nostalgic for our childhood Erector Set) and take fluorescent tubes. A six-foot-high floor model, called Chicago Tribune, costs $1,800, and two table versions, W.W.F. Tower and Josef, which look like Sixth Avenue office buildings at night, go for $600.

Just around the corner, at Lightforms, we saw another lamp, entitled Metropol, that seemed to have been plucked right out of the urban landscape—although the Tower of Babel was the first thing that came to mind. It's a six-foot-plus gray concrete floor job with a frosted acrylic shade that resembles an ancient Egyptian abstract design for a flower petal; $479. There were several attractive, somewhat more restrained torchères here, all with Italian names, like Gena Terra, Rediquadri, and Mascia, and ranging in price from $460 to $565. Lightforms and the MOMA store carry the small and nifty Copilot Map Light, a thirteen-inch-high flexible-neck lamp that takes a five-watt halogen bulb and plugs into either the cigarette lighter of a car or its own five-inch-high transformer base; $50. Halogen bulbs, used extensively in automobile headlights, have opened up lighting design, because of their small size and high intensity; many of the designs we came across—often tubular, often graceful, nearly always compact—would have been impossible with a regular light bulb. (Halogen bulbs can last up to four times as long as regular bulbs, are more efficient, and can produce twice as much light, and, for all this, naturally cost more.) One of these innovative designs looks like an extraterrestrial: it has a black triangular shade and three telescoping chrome legs that can go from twenty-eight inches down to eight. But it's no UFO; not only does it have an Italian-sounding name, Kandido, but it's a Porsche. It tilts and turns and swivels and sort of grows on you, and it takes a high/low fifty-watt halogen bulb; $297.

The "itty bitty" Gro Lite, available at Lightforms, is black, thin, and nearly invisible, and has a telescoping arm that can grow with a plant and that clamps to the side of the pot; $29. Jenny B. Goode, 1194 Lexington Avenue (81st) and 11 East 10th Street, sells Tulip Lamps—a dozen artificial yellow, white, pink, or red tulips that have implanted in each "blossom" a little Christmas-tree bulb. They lie on their side in a bunch, glowing cheerfully for $35.

THIS brings us to our favorite international designer, Natura Madre. Cherchez, 864 Lexington Avenue (65th), sells startlingly fresh-looking dried-flower and dried-herb wreaths, ranging from six inches in diameter ($15) to fourteen inches ($125). The flowers—wonderful ones like peonies, bellflowers, lilies, and larkspur—are unexpectedly lush and full, having been hand-dried in silica gel, a sandlike substance, by an upstate naturalist. We are told that if these are kept out of direct sunlight they will last a long time. Wolfman-Gold sells flower wreaths from upstate, too, and these are even bigger and more spectacular, ranging from eighteen inches to forty-two inches, and costing from $80 to $500. The New York Botanical Garden shop in the I.B.M. Building, 590 Madison Avenue (57th), gets into the act with wreaths made by a Catskills naturalist; the twelve-to-eighteen-inch wreaths, which have a definite country accent, consist of joe-pye weed, black-eyed Susans, wheat, meadowsweet, chive blossoms, Chinese lanterns, and sage, and run from $50 to $90. Salou, 452-A Columbus Avenue (81st), the only florist we know of that keeps a white pigeon named Chicken on the premises, specializes in a dried red pepper-berry wreath—edible but very spicy—that comes in five-inch ($40) and ten-inch ($75) sizes. Salou

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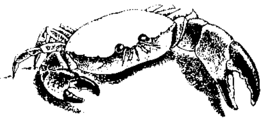

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also plants groups of seven or eleven paper-white narcissus in a bed of moss in a glass saucer or a terra-cotta bowl and sells them for $30 or $40.

Robert Homma, 27 East 61st Street, creates lovely mini-landscapes out of paper-whites or lilies-of-the-valley interplanted with bright-green ryegrass in blue-green-glazed antique Chinese ginger jars ($200), or in wooden garden-shop flats, one by two feet and larger (from $125 to $200). An even more striking Homma planting is done in hand-blown Pfister glass bowls, known to design mavens and intense shoppers; a slightly sunken twenty-inch dish holds a couple of dozen paper-whites ($450), and a twelve-inch-wide, eight-inch-deep bowl within a bowl holds two or three amaryllis bulbs or about ten hyacinths ($400). And the Botanical Garden shop sells (as do just about all nurseries, many florists, and enlightened five-and-dimes) individual narcissus bulbs (sixty-five cents each)—paper-whites and the less hardy but worth-the-risk bright-yellow soleils d'or—that you can set in soil or rocks or pebbles (marble chips are two pounds for $2) in a waterproof, holeless terra-cotta bowl glazed on the inside ($6.50 for a five-inch, $8.50 for a seven-inch), or in something snazzier, or even in a pie plate. It takes from four to six weeks for the bulbs to shoot up and put out flowers, and the flowers last about two weeks. Although we rather like the way they smell, some people think narcissus smell vaguely like horses. We have found an unarguably sweet smell in winter-blooming jasmine that you can order by mail as a houseplant from White Flower Farm, Litchfield, Connecticut 06759. It comes either in a dark-green plastic hanging basket ($20) or, more glamorously, in a stoneware pot ($42), and will make January worthwhile—that's when it begins a month of blooming.

And we suggest that before you head for the stores you consider visiting either the nearest Japanese rock garden (there's one in the Brooklyn Botanic Garden) or Frank Lloyd Wright room (there's one at the Metropolitan Museum, but, unfortunately, you can't sit down in it) just to clear your head.

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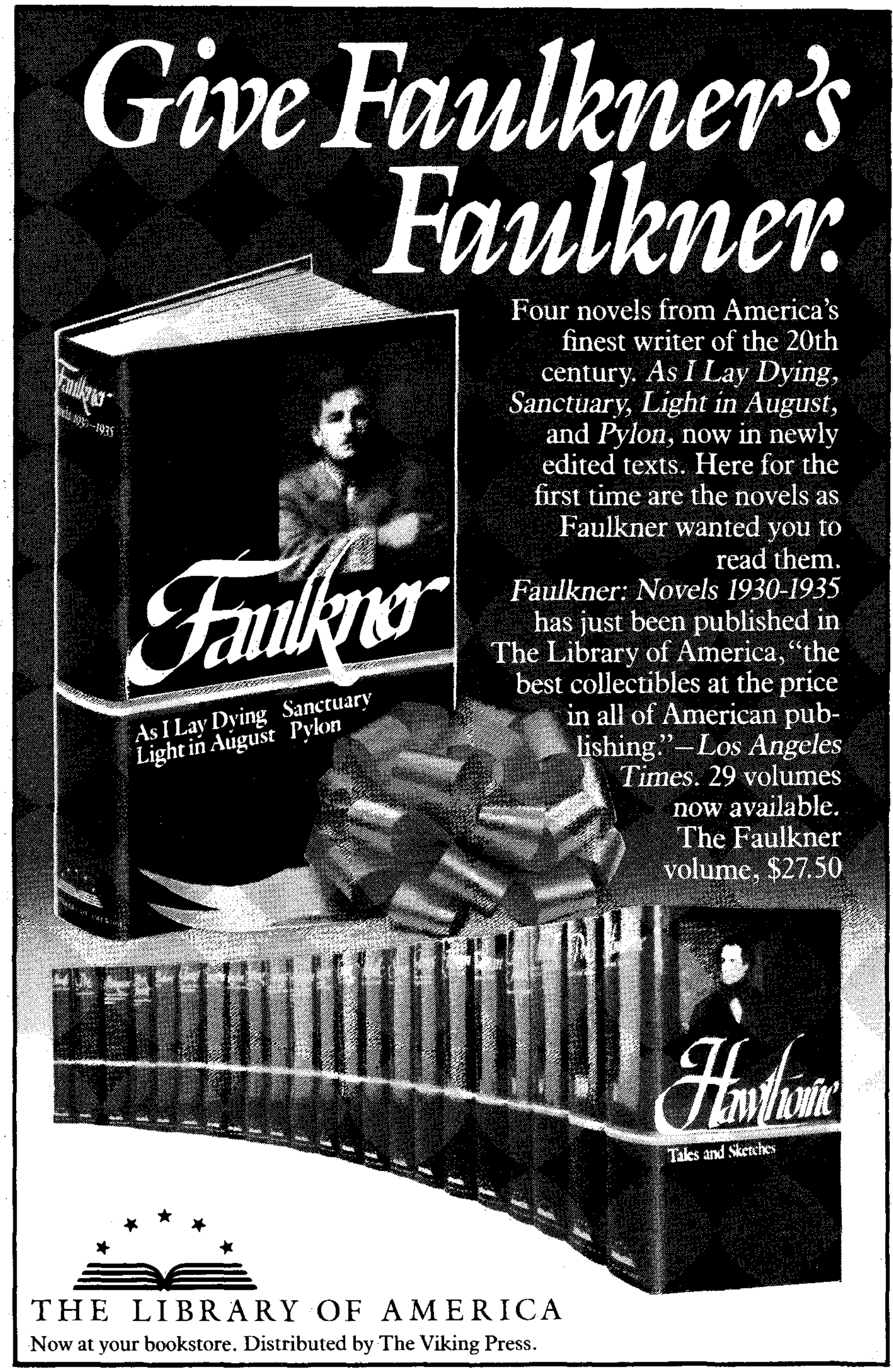

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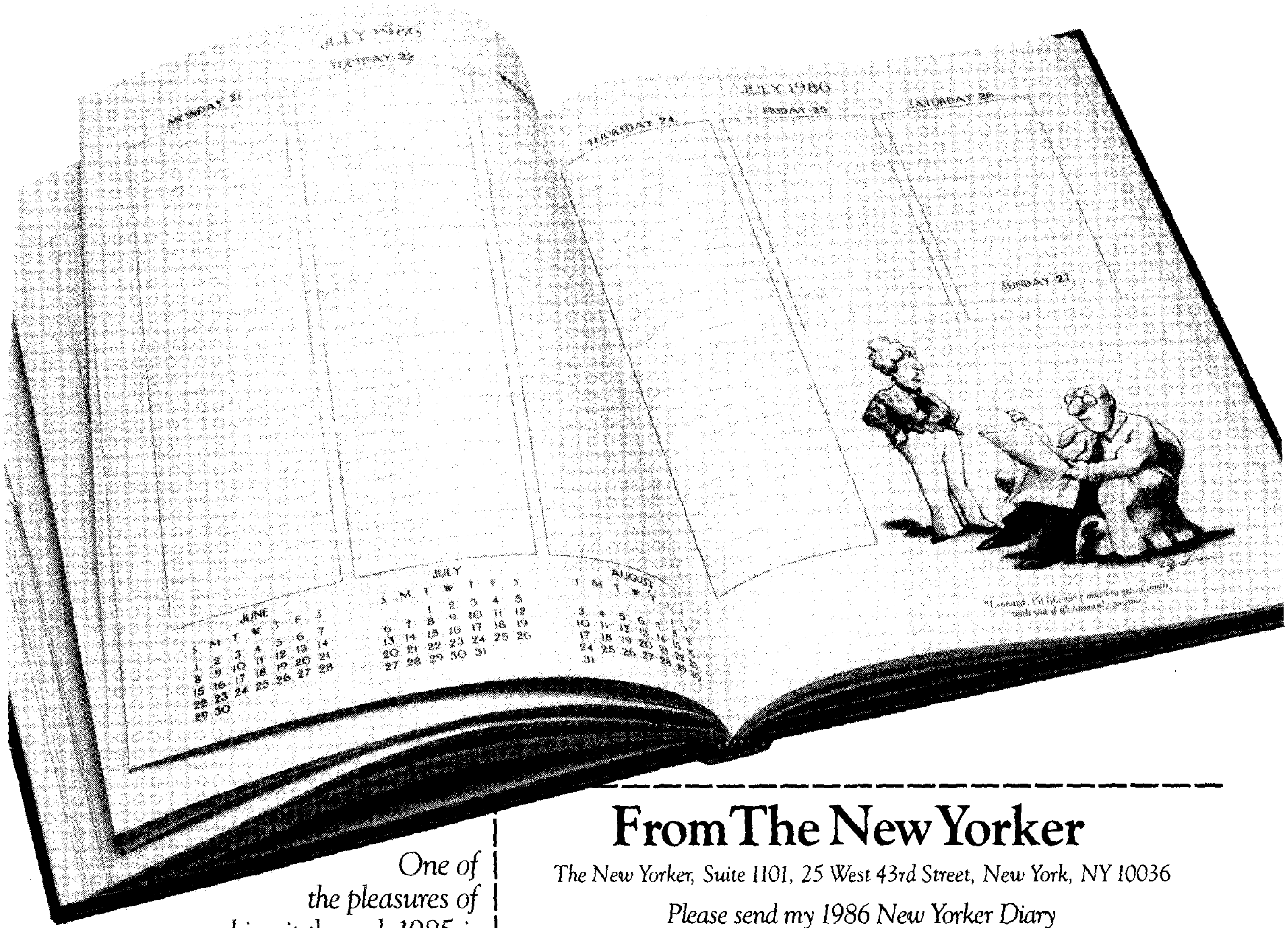
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MUSICAL EVENTS

Handel in Maryland

THE Maryland Handel Festival—now four, previously three, days of concerts and international conference—flourishes. Its directors are the conductor Paul Traver and the scholar Howard Serwer. The principal site is the College Park campus of the University of Maryland. At the first festival, in 1981, "Messiah" was the main work performed—a conservative choice, but controversially presented. Then a chronological progress through the oratorios began: "Esther" in 1982, "Deborah" in 1983. Last year brought a bicentennial diversion—a monster "Messiah" in Washington Cathedral, based on the 1784 commemorative jamboree in Westminster Abbey. But this year things got back on course, with "Athalia," and "Saul" is due next year.

In Winton Dean's great book on Handel's dramatic oratorios, chapters on the early works begin with magisterial verdicts: " 'Esther' is one of those works, like the operas of Glinka and Dargomijsky, whose historical importance exceeds their aesthetic value." " 'Deborah' is a failure." " 'Athalia' is the first great English oratorio." But Maryland showed that "Esther," like Glinka's operas, is well worth getting to know. It lightened the sentence on poor "Deborah," which holds some marvellous music and some stirring scenes. This year, it confirmed the judgment on "Athalia." "Athalia," like "Esther," is based on a drama by Racine. "Athalie" (1691) was his last play. Like his "Esther," it was written for the demoiselles of Saint-Cyr. Voltaire declared that if Racine's "Iphigénie" was "the masterwork of the classic stage" his "Athalie" was "the masterwork of the human spirit." A. W. Schlegel disputed the former opinion but endorsed the second in an enthusiastic page of his "Lectures on Dramatic Literature":

> In "Athalie" . . . the poet exhibited himself for the last time, before taking leave of poetry and the world, in his whole strength. It is not only his most finished work, but, I have no hesitation in declaring it to be, of all French tragedies the one which, free from all mannerism, approaches the nearest to the grand style of the Greeks. The chorus is conceived fully in the ancient sense. . . . The scene has all the majesty of a public action. Expectation, emotion, and keen agitation succeed each other, and continually rise with the progress of the drama: with a severe abstinence from all foreign matter, there is still a display of the richest variety, sometimes of sweetness, but more frequently of majesty and grandeur. . . . Its import is exactly what that of a religious drama ought to be: on earth, the struggle between good and evil; and in heaven the wakeful eye of providence beaming, from unapproachable glory, rays of constancy and resolution.

What Schlegel says of the drama is true of Handel's music drama. The librettist, Samuel Humphreys, made a decent job of translating and adapting the play for Handel's use. Some of his lines are memorable. "Athalia" is not Handel's greatest oratorio; the Aeschylean "Saul," which followed, soars higher, and plumbs more deeply the sources of human character and action. So do "Samson," "Belshazzar," "Theodora," and "Jephtha." But already the themes of national destiny, individual rulers' cares, opposed creeds, oppression bravely borne and heroically resisted are woven in a work that has the grandeur, mounting tension, and variety that Schlegel admired in Racine. It touched its listeners' lives. Handel throws the choral cry "Bless the true Church, and save the King" into prominence; both Jacobites and Georgians in his audience could respond with fervor. Modern audiences find their own analogues. "Athalia" was first performed in the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford, in 1733, and is on occasion revived there. I'd never heard it anywhere else until the Maryland performance, which was given in the Memorial Chapel at College Park. For the first time, the festival had engaged a dramatic director—Nicholas Deutsch, whose "semi-staged" presentation of "Belshazzar" in Tully Hall last March was so impressive. "Athalia" wasn't staged, either, but again, with carefully timed entrances and exits and carefully planned platform stationing, the patterns of the drama were revealed. By simple means—the chorus parted in homage as the treble soloist ascended the steep chorus risers and turned at the top to dominate the scene—Racine's big

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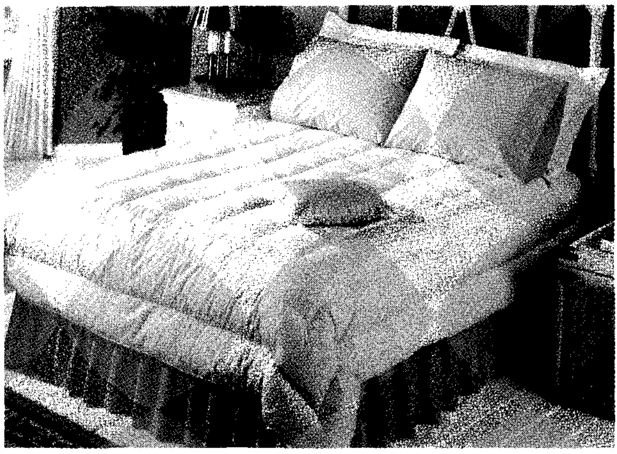

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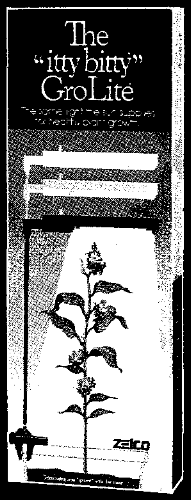

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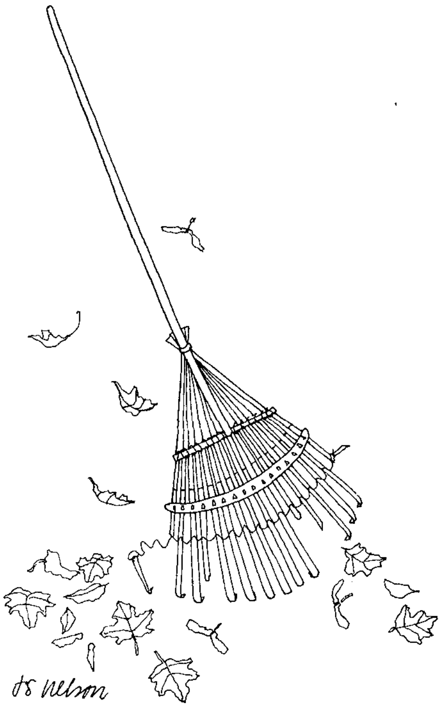
tableau, of the boy king enthroned and the baffled Athalia below, was potently suggested. It wasn't quite as remarkable as the "Belshazzar": the singers held scores; the chapel's lighting resources were less than Tully's; and Mr. Deutsch overused an effect that in "Belshazzar" had been striking. There, the monarch seemed to quail before the chorus's massed accusatory glance; here, when the choristers intently followed stichomythic dispute, swivelling their gazes as one, the result tended to suggest a slow-motion Wimbledon. But the artists all knew what the work was about, and their singing took fire therefrom. Handel composed "Athalia" in cumulative scenes and acts, not in numbers. Many of the movements are short, and often they are broken into by the chorus; the extended airs are few and are strategically placed. The Maryland presentation conveyed a strong sense of a single day's action—a day of crisis that has been long preparing. It is the festival of Shavuot; the celebration, interrupted, can resume at the end with unforeseen extra cause for rejoicing. Racine laid all the action in the Temple. Humphreys and Handel moved one scene to the royal palace, where in anguished, startling music Athalia, tyrannical regent of Judah, recounts her foreboding dream. (It began with a minatory visit from the shade of her mother, Jezebel, and passed to a fearful vision of Jezebel's death, as she is torn apart by dogs.) In contrast, her courtiers try vainly to cheer her in some of Handel's most seductively lovely strains. (The "voluptuous beauty of heathendom" was the apt phrase of R. A. Streatfeild, Samuel Butler's friend and executor, and a perceptive Handel commentator.) No one tells us just what scene from "Athalia" it was that Berlioz performed at the Opéra in 1840. I like to think it was this one, which has Berliozian graphicness.

Linda Mabbs did not have quite the temperament for the formidable, Clytemnestra-like role—"the lonely towering figure of Athalia," as Dean puts it. (Joan Sutherland recently recorded it, for a Oiseau-Lyre set due next year.) Theatrically, she had softened what could be a proud royal profile with a housewifely hairstyle, and this seemed to reflect a reluctance to give full dramatic value to the part. But she had got a good deal of the way, and her singing was assured. Judith Nelson was well suited by the music of the anxious, gentle, loving Josabeth—quietly steadfast in her opposition to Athalia, and in dynastic analogy perhaps a Church of England Mary or Anne with no wish to see her Roman Catholic parent on the throne. Miss Nelson's voice moved fluently and truly through Handel's music, and shone as it rose. (Josabeth is, in fact, the prima-donna role; it was composed for Anna Strada, who remained loyal to Handel when his other Italians deserted to the rival Opera of the Nobility.) Joad, the High Priest of Judah, Josabeth's husband, was sung by Derek Lee Ragin, an American countertenor who has made a European reputation. His voice is well formed and of agreeable quality. His line was flexible and cleanly drawn. There's something not yet quite right, but it's hard to define: a touch of preciousness, perhaps. I was reminded of the early, Alfred Deller days of the countertenor revival. Ragin seemed a shade too smilingly anxious to please; he lacked the assurance of manner with which a Drew Minter or Jeffrey Gall deploys the countertenor as one among the many voices that can delight us. But he's very promising. Maybe he just needs more stage experience. The boy king Joas was touchingly sung by Christopher Pittenger, whose treble rang out with sweetness and sincerity. It broke just once, and not inappropriately for the characterization of a seven-year-old boy who suddenly learns that he must now be a king. Abner, the Judaic general, was resonantly sung by Gordon Hawkins, a gifted young baritone, but one who showed signs of aspiring to bawl Verdi or Gershwin into America's oversized opera houses. If he wants to be a Handelian, he must learn to lighten and refine his tones and achieve a more forward focus.



The foundation on which the Handel Festival is built is the University of Maryland Chorus—an ensemble of lithe, fresh, responsive young voices—and its founder and conductor, Mr. Traver. The chorus is, as Dean says, "the real hero and hub of 'Athalia.' " The Maryland chorus sang precisely, brightly, trenchantly—sensuously as Athalia's Baalites, fervently and grandly as the people of Judah. Mr. Traver commands light-stepping, dancing Baroque gaits, and achieves grandeur without heaviness. Once or twice, I thought his tempi a little slow. Sometimes there were delayed cadences where Handel, surely, intended a springboard into what follows. The Smithsonian Chamber Players, mustered at strength (the score calls for four-part violins, solo cello, horns, trumpets, recorders, a theorbo), played well. The orchestra was so seated that many of the players could see the singers.

The festival began with Handel's masque "Acis and Galatea," given a concert performance in the chapel. Unstaged, it can be done with just eleven performers: five singers—a soprano, three tenors, and a bass—and six instrumentalists, provided the oboists double on recorders. The soloists join as the chorus, and it's a long sing for the Galatea, the Acis, and the Polypheme. In Maryland, there were twelve performers. (First oboe and first recorder were taken by different players.) The piece was unconducted, and it seemed to me underrehearsed: an able account by an assemblage of proficient artists, but one without much character or liveliness. The individual contributions of Ann Monoyios, a limpid Galatea, and of Patrick Romano, verbally and musically incisive in the small role of Damon, gave much pleasure. Other festival pleasures were provided by Miss Nelson and Mr. Ragin in vocal chamber music (especially the duet setting, in Italian, of Horace's "Beatus ille," composed in 1742, the year of "Messiah"), and by a concert in the Library of Congress auditorium at which Mr. Traver conducted his choir in radiant Schütz performances,

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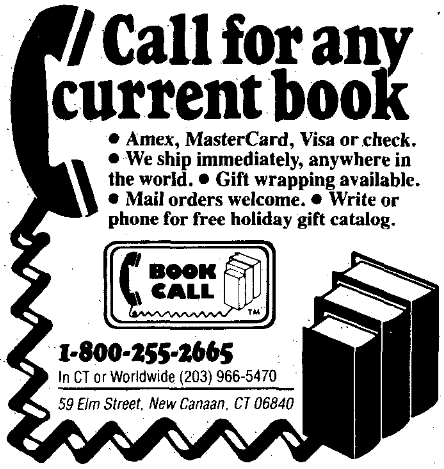

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From THE OXFORD BOOK OF AGES

"If I had any decency, I'd be dead. Most of my friends are."

Dorothy Parker

and the Smithsonian players in a graceful, high-spirited account of the "Water Music."

College Park seems short of restaurants. (Each day, Howard Johnson's was a scene of high-powered scholarly discussion.) Otherwise, it's a good place for Handelian activity. The university has a Center for Renaissance and Baroque Studies. The university library houses the collection of the Handelian scholar J. M. Coopersmith. The Library of Congress, the Smithsonian Players, and the Washington Friends of Handel make their contribution. Famous Handelians are invited from round the world. It was at the 1982 festival that plans were mooted for a new, Anglo-American Handel edition, corrective to the snail-progress and what Grove gently calls the "varying standard of reliability" of the Handel edition coming from Halle. (If Prince Charles were to be patron of such a venture, the old connection between Handel and the House of Hanover would be renewed.) Possible rivalry was resolved in coöperation: Halle, thus challenged, reorganized its editorial policy and promised to pull up its socks. The theme of next year's festival symposium will probably be editing Handel's music. Notable among the papers delivered this year were Robert Hume's questions about some biographical facts that should have caused scholars more surprise; John Roberts' demonstration of Handel's covering his tracks when, putting on Vinci's "Didone Abbandonata" with his company, he carefully recomposed passages he'd earlier borrowed for use in his own operas; and Dean's demonstration, centered on "Ottone," of the care Handel took to get his operas right.

An American Handel Society, based in College Park, has been founded. Its address is Department of Music, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland 20742.

GOOD reports have been coming from Milwaukee about the work there of the Skylight Comic Opera. A visit to the company's production of "Serse," which was given a run of twelve performances last month, proved them accurate. The show was serious, stylish, and entertaining—conceived with high intelligence and executed with enthusiasm. "Serse," which Handel completed in 1738, the year he composed "Saul," is a late opera, and freer in form than its predecessors. The libretto was originally written for Cavalli, eighty years before, when opera was still young and the da-capo and exit-air conventions had not been codified. "Serse" mingles—sometimes in the same scene—profound emotion and merry observation of life's more absurd aspects. It's been well called Mozartian in tone—by, among others, Dean, who in the New Grove writes, "This comprehensiveness of mood and dramatic approach gives [Handel's] operas a depth seldom attained in the history of art." He continues, "But their quality can emerge only from productions based on a complete understanding of the convention." Stephen Wadsworth, the director of the Skylight "Serse," and his cast showed such an understanding. Among the many productions of a Handel-rich year, this one holds a high place. It was neither an eighteenth-century "reconstruction" nor an updated version. The setting, although described as "an imagined England, 1730's," was a simple seven-arched arcade, the arches filled with rich Persian hangings that could be drawn in different patterns—a practicable and attractive décor, designed by Thomas Lynch. The Skylight Theatre, which is small (it seats two hundred and fifty), was ingeniously and intimately used. All moves had a purpose. Each number—in what the program note rightly called a "story of love, growth, and self-knowledge"—made its points precisely and movingly.

The outstanding performers were Lynnen Yakes, in the title role, and Wendy Hill, as Romilda. Miss Yakes's delivery of "Più che penso"—the monarch at once majestic, voluptuous, and ironically self-aware—goes on delighting memory's ear and eye. She has a wonderful stage face, with speaking eyes, eloquent frowns and smiles. Her performance was gleaming, wholehearted, various, and disciplined. Miss Hill sparkled, charmed, and was affecting. Donna Stephenson's Arsamenes was precise and moving in song and in action. John Kuether's Elviro was trimly and amusingly sung; his stage movement was a bit loose and wild. Michael Pisani, at the harpsichord, directed a small, alert band; the string playing could with advantage have been lighter and thinner at times. Cutting was gentle: only four of the forty airs, ariosos, or ariettas, and two brief choruses. Mr. Wadsworth had made a crisp, sensitive new English translation.

—ANDREW PORTER

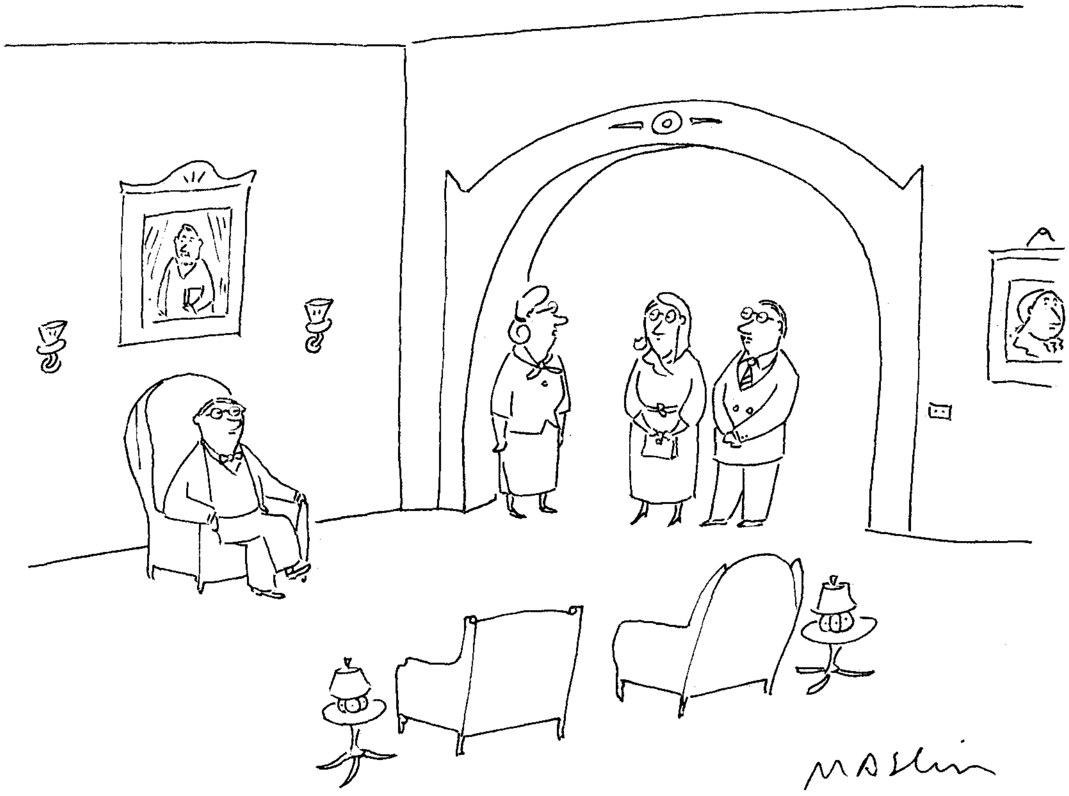
BOOKS

The Summer of Souls

WHY do we so often find the letters of poets more arresting, closer to the passing moment of the day, more daring in their insights than the letters of the discursive novelist? Is it that the poet is at once more solitary and less guarded in his response to the impromptus of the imagination? Is it that the poet enhances the moments of seeing and feeling we have generalized? Who among the great proseurs of letter-writing—even a Henry James—can match the *sans-gêne* of a Pushkin or a Byron, or is more telling in his clarity than, say, a Keats, who so naturally enlightens us about his famous "negative capability," whereas the novelists are entranced by their general, and positive, power of going on? In his letters, Yeats seems to free himself of literary habit, so that we come close to his nature.

Certainly the collection of often eloquent letters exchanged by two Russian poets, Boris Pasternak and Marina Tsvetayeva, and the German Rainer Maria Rilke—"Letters: Summer 1926" (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $24.95)—has this swift power. There is also the strangeness of the poets' situation. They have become isolated after the First World War and the Russian Revolution. They worship one another in that summer. They are entranced by their foreignness. They are exemplars of a cross-fertilization in the European mind. The two Russians have been educated in Europe. The older and almost Proustian Rilke travelled in his youth in Russia, speaks Russian well, can even attempt a poem in Russian. Through Pasternak's father, he has met Tolstoy; he has read Lermontov and Dostoyevski, and has been captivated by what used to be called "the Russian soul" and by a patriarchal and naturally religious culture that, he felt, had kept Russia free of the materialism of bourgeois life in decadent Europe. If the two Russians are not quite in this state of piety, they are in the piety of tradition; they dislike the public language of revolution. They come of educated, scholarly, and gifted families, now conscious of isolation. Futurism had attracted Pasternak. He has come to think, in this summer, that his early writing is affected in its daring. Tsvetayeva, the spontaneous genius, is simply her strange self. (The reader will find a commentary by the three editors of the volume, Yevgeny and Yelena Pasternak and Konstantin M. Azadovsky, on esoteric matters of literary movements—matters like neo-Romanticism—which will be helpful if one cares about movements.) The final strangeness of the correspondence is that in this summer the parties have never really met. Pasternak had briefly seen Tsvetayeva years before, and had thought nothing of her until he read a volume of her poems. They amazed him. As I have said, the metaphysical notion of the Russian soul is their preoccupation; this indeed puts a date on them. Pasternak will eventually think of himself, in his searching autobiographical writing, as the historian of a generation that has dropped out of history. As a writer of letters, he is an intellectual, conscious of a mission, and is the most assured and searching of the three. He has passion, and his survival is due to an extraordinary integrity as an artist. As we know, he had intended to be a pianist, as his mother was, but gave it up because he found he had not perfect pitch. That perfection of pitch will be noticed in his letters.

The least "settled" of these geniuses is the spontaneous Tsvetayeva. If the Russians had a soul, hers was like a cluster of shooting stars, and the most wayward. There was no prose at all in her. If she was a Romantic or a neo-Romantic, a Futurist—or whatever label of criticism fits her—she was fiercely and elusively one who asserted, for example, that there is a gulf between the soul and the body. She was no romantic descendant of George Sand, and Rilke himself was unnerved by her. She writes in her letters of her "dislove of love," however carnal at times her language may be. Married and the mother of children, struggling among the washtubs, the pots and pans, she saw herself as the embodiment of Psyche and speaks of "the ancient, insatiable hate of Psyche for



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Eve—Eve, of whom there is nothing in me. Of Psyche—everything." She is elusive—headlong and ecstatic. Her sentences are pistol shots. In the introduction to these letters we are told of the words of her sister: "She created whatever she wished, paying little attention to actuality." The editors add that she "often forgot about the real person she was writing to, carried away by an image that the moment's inspiration dictated." An exhausting and dangerous friend, but a very fine poet. One is alarmed but not altogether surprised to learn that she was drawn at one time to Rudolf Steiner and anthroposophy! It strikes one that she could have declaimed Nina's wild lines about the World Spirit in Chekhov's "The Seagull" with conviction. It is a very literary play.

Tsvetayeva's letters are in many ways the most original in this collection. They are poems in the making, and, indeed, she wrote them at first in the notebooks out of which her poems grew. As the editors say, they are really epistolary poems. She is, for example, playing with her children at the seaside in France in 1926. As she watches her children run about, she sees her own childhood rather than theirs. And goes on:

> But there's one thing, Boris: I don't like the sea. Can't bear it. A vast expanse and nothing to walk *on*—that's one thing. In constant motion and I can only watch it—that's another. Why, Boris, it's the same thing all over again, i.e., it's my notorious, involuntary immobility. My inertness. My beastly tolerance, whether I want to be tolerant or not. And the sea at night?—cold, terrifying, invisible, unloving, filled with itself—like Rilke (itself or divinity, no matter). I pity the earth: it feels cold. The sea never *feels* cold, it *is* cold—it is all its horrible features. They are its essence. An enormous refrigerator (at night). An enormous boiler (in the daytime). And perfectly round. A monstrous *saucer. Flat*, Boris.... It cannot be worshipped (too terrible). As I would have hated Jehovah, for instance, as I hate any great power. The sea is a dictatorship, Boris. A mountain is a divinity. A mountain has many sides... Can you believe it, Boris?—I'm beginning to feel drawn to the sea by a kind of morbid curiosity—so as to be convinced of my own instability.

In this year, Pasternak is laboring at a long poem on Lieutenant Schmidt, a hero of the Revolution of 1905, who led a mutiny on his ship and was executed—a very proper, even a required, subject in Russia after 1917. With reservations, Pasternak had welcomed the Revolution. He was working at the time for twenty hours a day on this epic. Tsvetayeva had written at length her own symbolic interpretation of the fable of the Pied Piper, and she was stirred to make shrewd comments on Pasternak's "Lieutenant Schmidt." Like all poets who turn to criticism, she sticks to her guns. It is not the poem *she* would have written. It's a pity, she says, that he chose a hero of their times—"timeless times"—rather than "a hero of ancient times, or, to put it more precisely... a victim of dreaming instead of a hero of our dreams." What is Schmidt? He's not a sailor at all, she says. He's a Russian intellectual of 1905—"so much an intellectual (see Chekhov's 'At Sea') that all his years at sea had no effect on his intellectual slang." Pasternak's Schmidt is just "an inspired student of the late nineties":

> Boris, I don't like intellectuals and never consider myself one of them, they are all so *pince-nez-y*. I like aristocrats and the common people, the flower and the root, Blok of the blue skies and Blok of the wide spaces.

Schmidt's jokes, she goes on, are awkward and unamusing:

> There is less of yourself in this than in your other things. Enormous as you are, this little man overshadows you.

And why did he introduce Schmidt's complaining letters? He should have "raised him above the reality embedded in his words":

> You give the live Schmidt—the Chekhov–Blok–intellectual Schmidt. (Ever since I was a child I have hated Chekhov for his jokes, mockery...) Boris dear, have fewer letters... or put more of yourself into them. And have him grow in stature just before he dies.

Pasternak was ecstatic about *her* poetry—all the more ecstatic because he was tormented by his own. He came near to being stormily in love with her, but he was married and so was she. She was quick to ward off his moment of passion:

> Do you know what *I* want—when I want? Darkness, light, transfiguration. The most remote headland of another's soul—and my own.... I cannot bear being with other people.

And, again:

> Remember that our blood is older than we are, especially yours, Semitic. Don't emasculate it. And take what you must from a lofty height, from the height of poetry—no, from the height of ethics!

She went off to Paris. Rilke, the distant god, died. The summer of souls in 1926 was over. She did not return to Moscow until 1939, at the start of the new war, and then committed sui-

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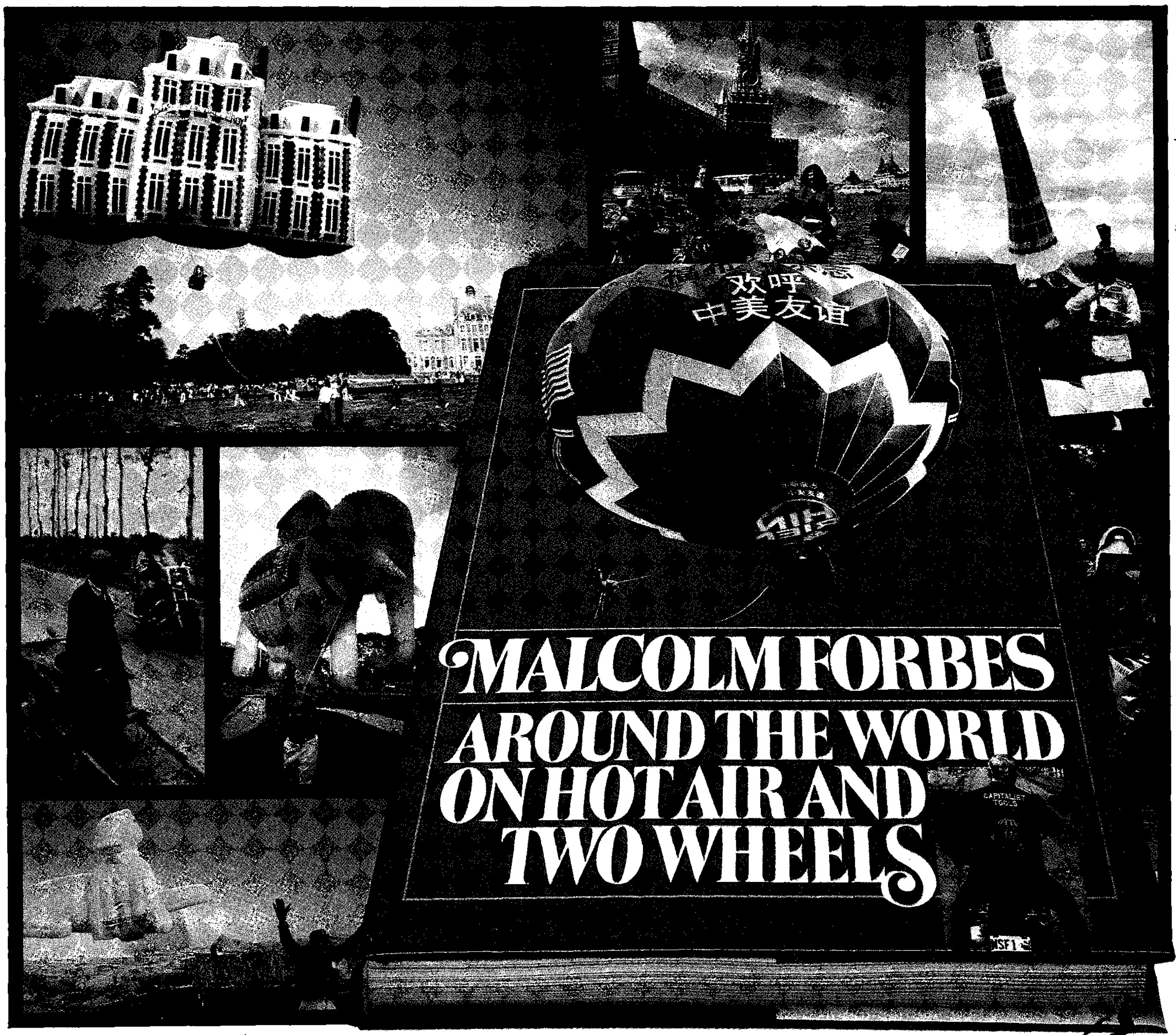

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ide. No wonder they all say this was not a time for lyrical poetry.

—V. S. PRITCHETT

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

WATSON'S APOLOGY, by Beryl Bainbridge (McGraw-Hill; $14.95). Courtship letters dated 1844 and court transcripts dated 1872: as Beryl Bainbridge explains in a prefatory note, these and other authentic historical documents—on which this haunting, austere novel is based—have been "edited here and there to fit the needs of the narrative." The first few of the courtship letters suggest a happy case of love at first sight, between a bright-eyed aging Irishwoman and an earnest aging English scholar; but when the future Mrs. Watson exclaims, at their first rendezvous, "We are very alike . . . I have always been my own worst enemy" it is clear that she is right, and that she is afflicted with something worse than indiscretion. Twenty-seven years of bitter recriminations later, Mrs. Watson's "illness," as Mr. Watson daintily puts it, culminates in her retreat to a dressing room she calls her "glory hole." Mr. Watson, snubbed by publishers, who have read the reviews of his previous tomes, sees himself "sliding towards a pauper's grave." Like his wife, he is right, but he does not know that the slide will take twelve long years in prison. Beryl Bainbridge does a fine job of rendering each spouse's peculiar species of insanity. The result recalls Hitchcock as well as Kafka in its vivid physicality and in its glimmerings of humor. Toward the end, Mr. Watson, working on an extravagant theory about sunlight and surfaces, uses the word "beautiful" to describe to a fellow-convict a rabbit he saw in the prison yard. "The man looked at him dully and licked his lips. 'I'd sell my grandmother for a nice bit of rabbit,' he said."

MASTERS OF ATLANTIS, by Charles Portis (Knopf; $15.95). "Gnomonism Today," "101 Gnomon Facts," "Atlantis a Fable?," "The Universe a Congeries of Flying Balls?," "Hoosier Wizard," "The Jimmerson Spiral"—a few of the get-wise-quick books inspired by an arcane Greek booklet, full of precepts, puzzles, triangles, and cones, that a con man gives to a doughboy named Jimmerson in France around 1917. This is the story of Gnomonism (what the booklet is about) in America: a sixty-odd-year downward spiral from a limestone temple in Indiana to a polystyrene mobile home in Texas. Charles Portis, who chronicled a more mundane odyssey in his funny novel "The Dog of the South" (1979), is once again disarmingly deadpan as he conjures up a ragtag gang of disciples and their rivals, including an already wise would-be alchemist whose get-rich-quick scheme features acres of creeping bagweed, and a plump Rosicrucian who, feeling the Telluric Currents pulsing in his head, knows better than to reveal to the elder Gnomons what the future holds.

BACK IN THE WORLD, by Tobias Wolff (Houghton Mifflin; $15.95). Ten sad stories, one of which is notable: "Desert Breakdown, 1968," a bleak and hot variation on "Bus Stop." Enough striking details for one more story dot a few of the nine others: a three-legged dog's toenails clicking in a San Francisco fog, say, and a classy car speeding down a freeway with orange soda seeping into its leather upholstery.

GENERAL

SOCIALISM AND AMERICA, by Irving Howe (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $17.95). Briefly, and in prose that is a delight, the author outlines reasons that the American Socialist Party polled eight hundred and seventy-nine thousand votes—nearly six per cent of the total—in the Presidential election of 1912 but has subsequently declined to near-insignificance. Mr. Howe, who came of age and became a Socialist in the nineteen-thirties, amplifies history with his own recollections, capturing the moods of the past and explaining disagreements among Socialists over the reforms of the New Deal, the rise of Hitler, and the Communists' promotion of a united front. His sense of the future of Socialism is affectionate but foreboding: he fears it may have lost its hold on twentieth-century imaginations.

THE CRUSADES THROUGH ARAB EYES, by Amin Maalouf, translated from the French by Jon Rothschild (Schocken; $16.95). The author, who is Lebanese, has quarried contemporary Arab reports of the incursions of medieval Christian Europeans into the Middle East—the Crusades—and put together a readable and entertaining mirror image

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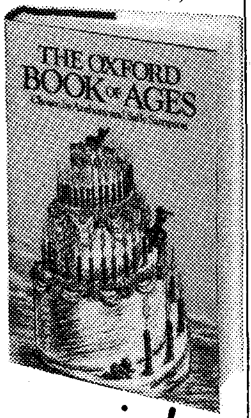

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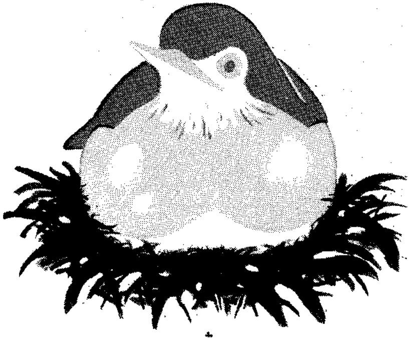

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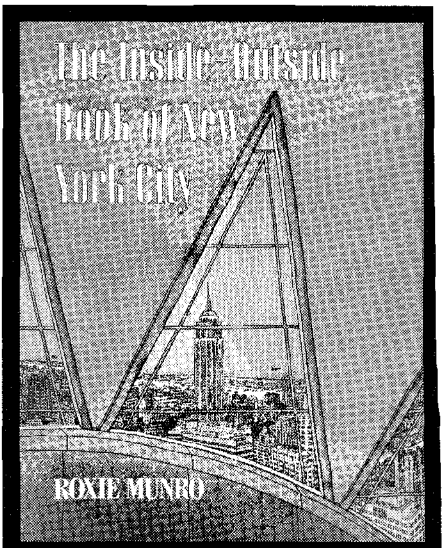

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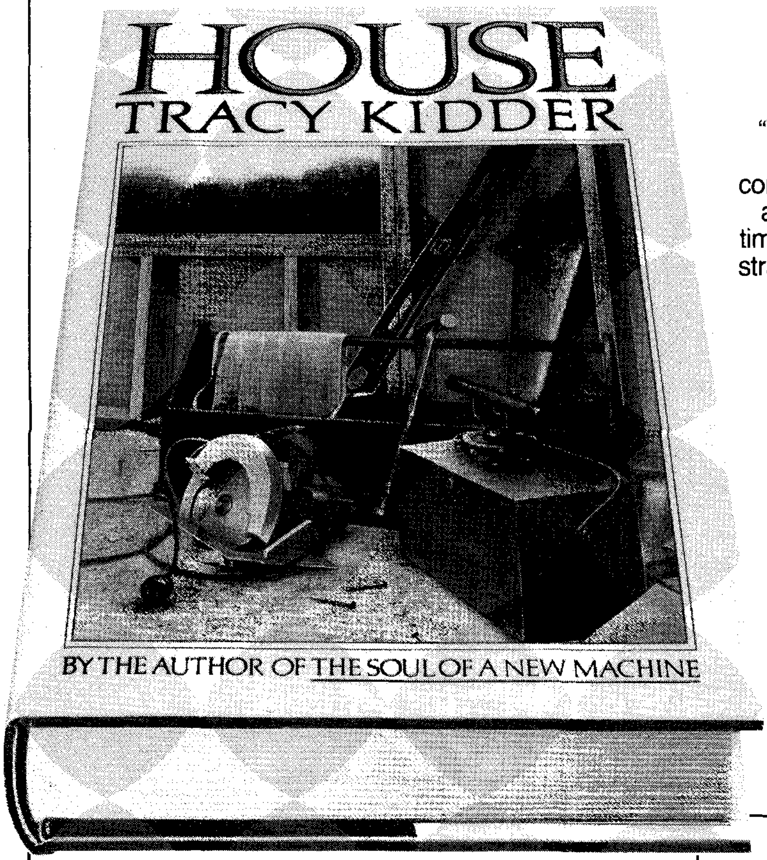

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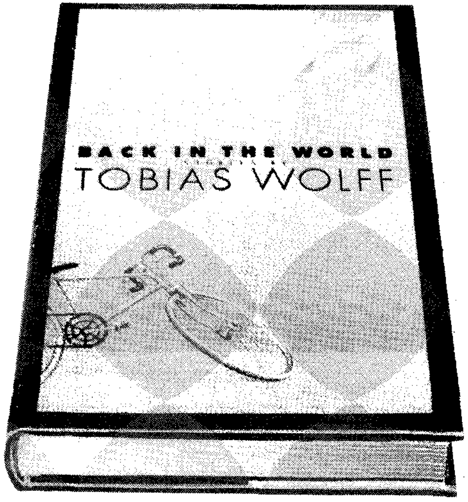

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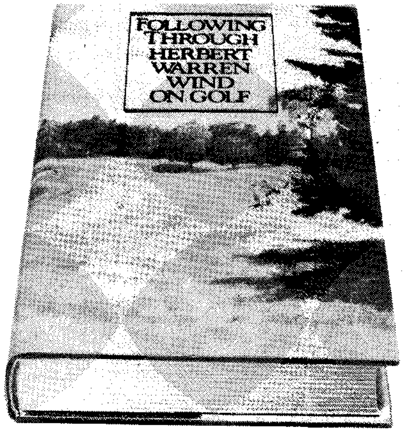

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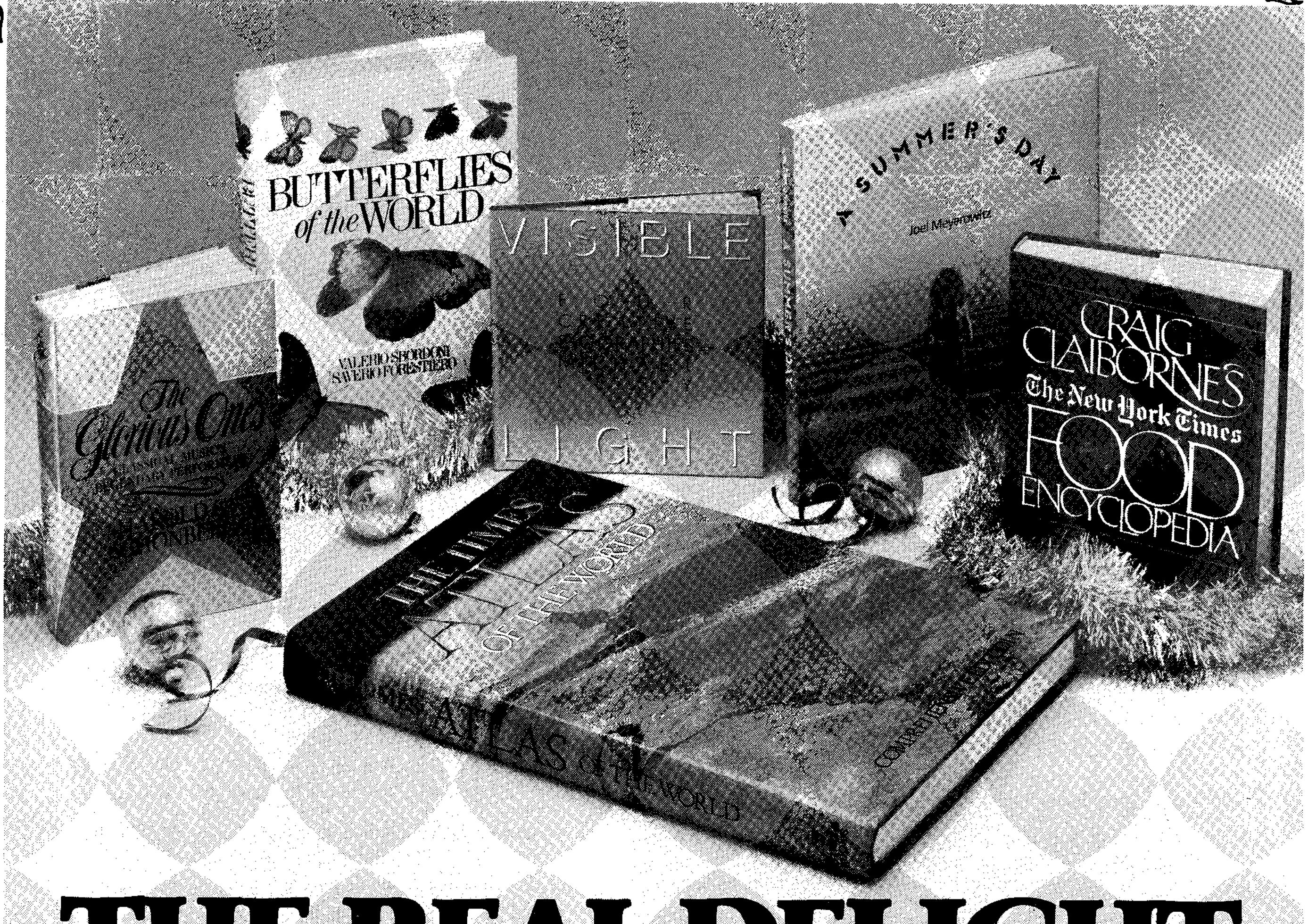
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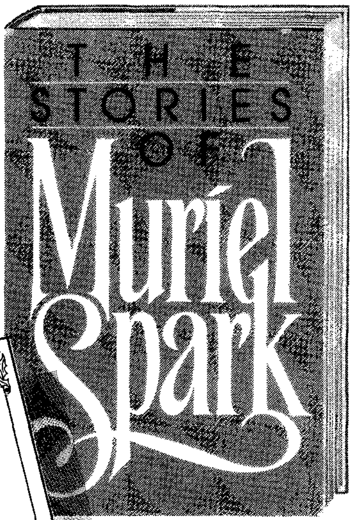
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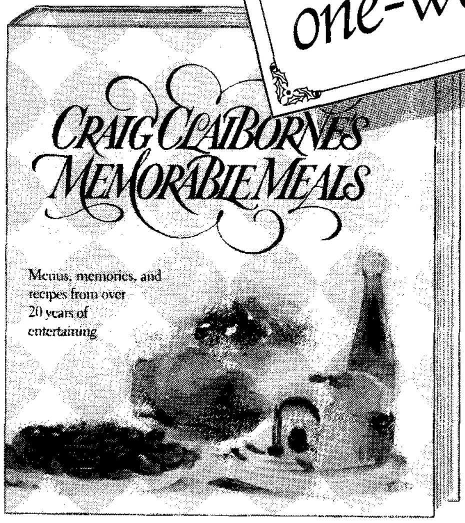
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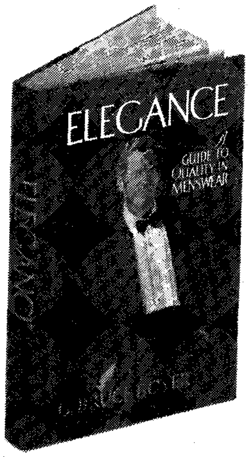
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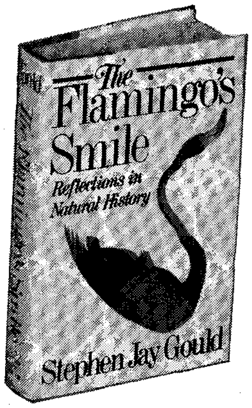
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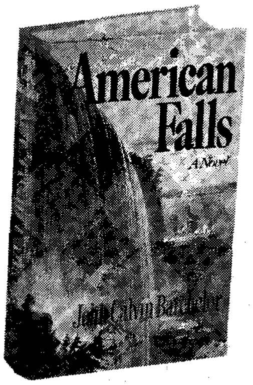
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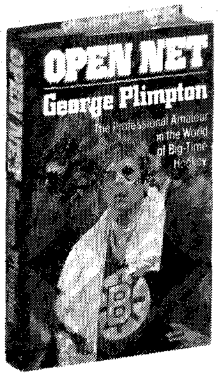
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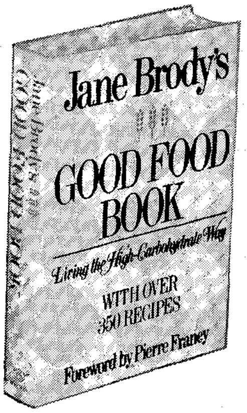
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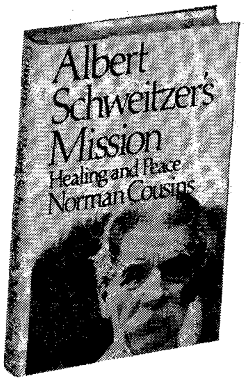
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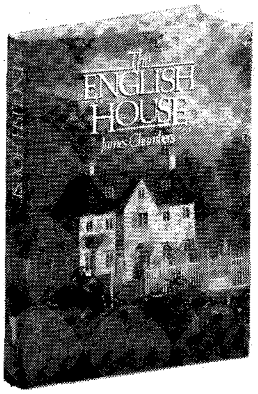
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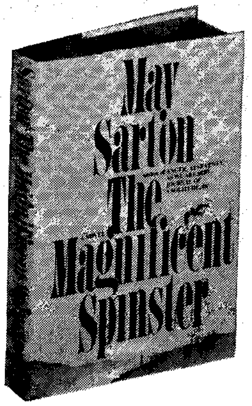
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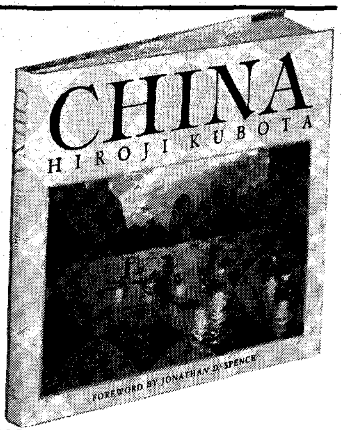
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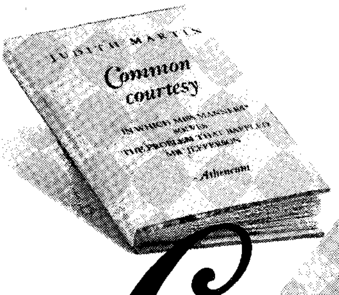
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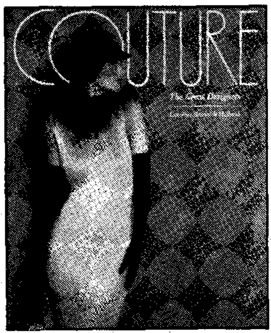
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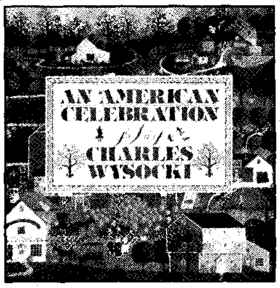
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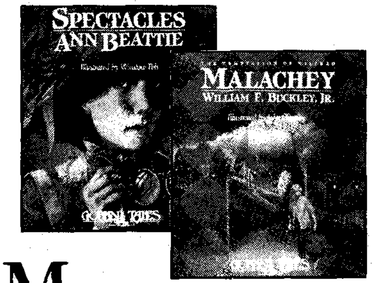
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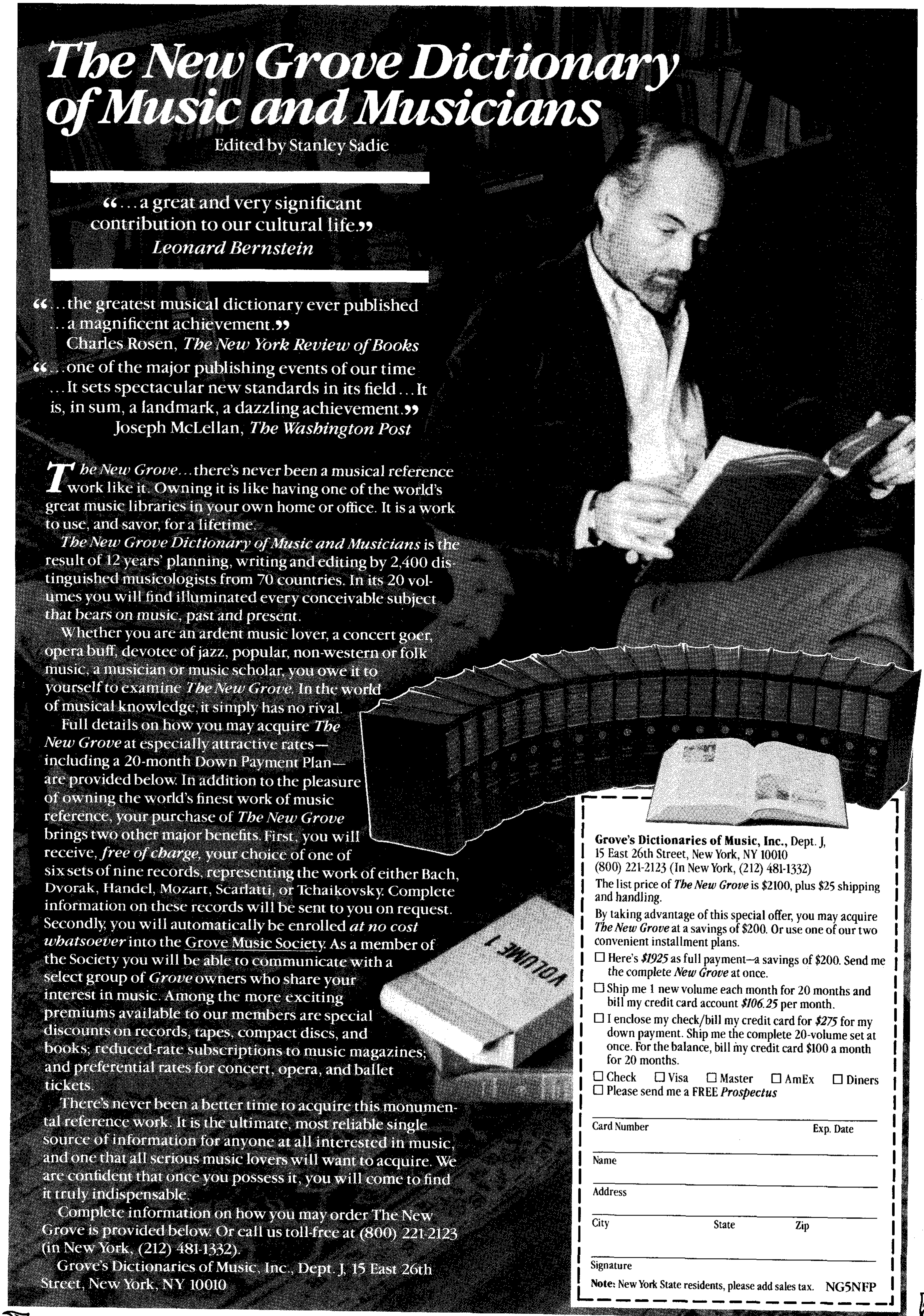

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READING TREASURES FOR HOLIDAY PLEASURE

SEASON'S READINGS

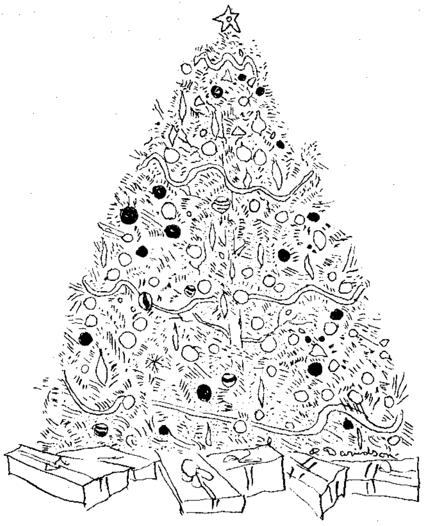
The holidays are here again—and we have our hands *full*. Right now we're doing our Christmas and Hanukkah lists, and you can take it from us that the choices are just about limitless. A glance around the office reveals a veritable *embarras de richesse*. There's something here for absolutely everyone, but how to choose?

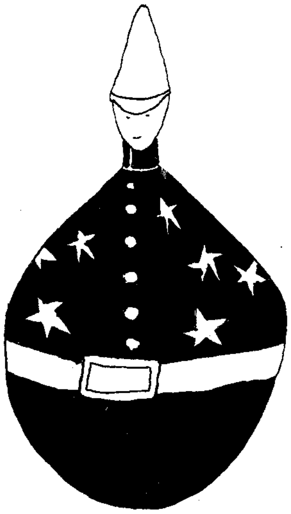
Decisions, decisions

Our great-aunt loves history—she'd appreciate a fascinating, readable history like **Dame Veronica Wedgwood's THE SPOILS OF TIME,** an epic sweep through the past from the caveman to the Renaissance man. And **Bob Hope's CONFESSIONS OF A HOOKER** will keep our duffer uncle smiling until the fairways thaw; we've always thought golf was a funny sort of game, but it took Hope to prove it.

For our aunt, it's got to be **FRANK SINATRA, MY FATHER;** she's been a fan of Ol'Blue Eyes since she was a kid, and Frank's daughter **Nancy Sinatra** tells the whole story, with scads of photographs and lots of quotes from Dad himself.

Speaking of stars and fans, we've got a cousin whose hero has always been **Mickey Mantle; THE MICK** is a grand-slam home run of an autobiography. Another cousin prefers science fiction to sports—he's read every book **Isaac Asimov** has ever written (fast reader, that kid). For him, Asimov's new novel **ROBOTS AND EMPIRE** is a natural.





The good things in life

Mother collects cookbooks, and by giving her **THE NEW DOUBLEDAY COOKBOOK** she won't need any of the others; it's a whole kitchen library of its own, with everything she needs to know—calorie, cholesterol, and sodium counts; cooking techniques; international cuisine—you name it. But, of course, variety is the spice of life, so our sister-in-law will be delighted with **THE FROG/COMMISSARY COOKBOOK** by **Steven Poses, Anne Clark,** and **Becky Roller.** Poses is Philadelphia's most brilliant and successful restaurateur, and his dazzling, illustrated book combines hundreds of innovative recipes for feasts as convivial and unique as his restaurants.

Our college roommate, who's moved from beer to wine, can drink in **AMERICAN WINE,** by **Anthony Dias Blue.** At 640 oversize pages (with nearly 6,000 different wines), it's the most complete consumer's guide to American wines you can find, and it thoroughly deserves the "Bravo" that Alexis Lichine bestowed upon it.

We've got a real taste for sumptuous, colorful coffee-table books, so **A SECOND PARADISE** with **Naveen Patnaik's** glorious depiction of courtly life in India from the Moghul Empire to the Ṛaj is certainly an exquisite book for several people on our list.

Friends with a passion for art will love **DEPTHS OF GLORY, Irving Stone's** remarkable new biographical novel of Camille Pissarro and the Impressionists. Truly a masterful portrait— and a wonderful read for those long winter evenings.

Wit and wisdom

We have one amusingly irreverent friend, and it would be a sin not to give her **GROWING UP CATHOLIC,** the hilarious bestselling guide to Holy Mother Church that will probably stuff more stockings this Christmas than oranges or candy canes.

In a more solemn vein, there's **THE NEW JERUSALEM BIBLE.** It's the best Study Bible anywhere, for anyone who takes faith seriously, and it's just been retranslated, revised, and fully annotated. Then, for intellectual, thought-provoking reading, there's nothing finer than **Jonathan Winson's** highly acclaimed **BRAIN AND PSYCHE,** an exploration of our minds and ourselves. Or **Israel Shenker's COAT OF MANY COLORS,** a brilliantly researched panorama of Judaism in all its fascinating richness. Or Jonathan Kozol's stirring call to arms, **ILLITERATE AMERICA.** It's one of the books we're proudest to have published this year and one we want everyone to read—or one of these Christmases there won't *be* anyone who can read the books we give.

Some personal favorites

Surely we've overlooked someone, but we've still got a little time and something from our list guaranteed to please anyone *on* our list— and *yours,* too! Old favorites with new books, like **Barbara Taylor Bradford's HOLD THE DREAM, William F. Buckley's RIGHT REASON, Peter Spier's THE BOOK OF JONAH,** and **Shari Lewis's ONE-MINUTE FAVORITE FAIRY TALES.**

That was delightfully easy. . .books always make such wonderful presents. Well, *almost* always. We knew an author once who was looking for a Christmas present for his girlfriend. Naturally, being an editor, we suggested a book. "That would be silly," he said. "She already has *my* book."

But unless all your friends are authors, we suggest *our* books. Books make the best presents. Besides, they're easy to wrap.

L.L.Day
Editor-at-Large

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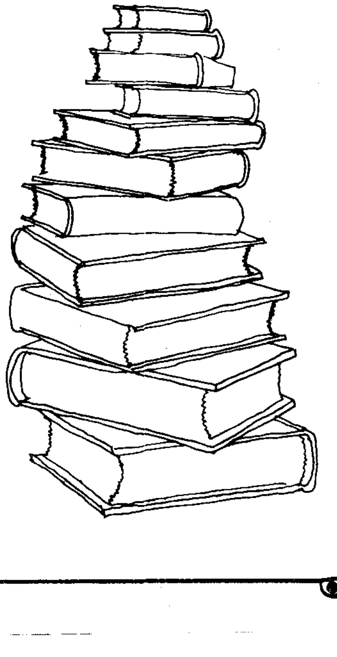

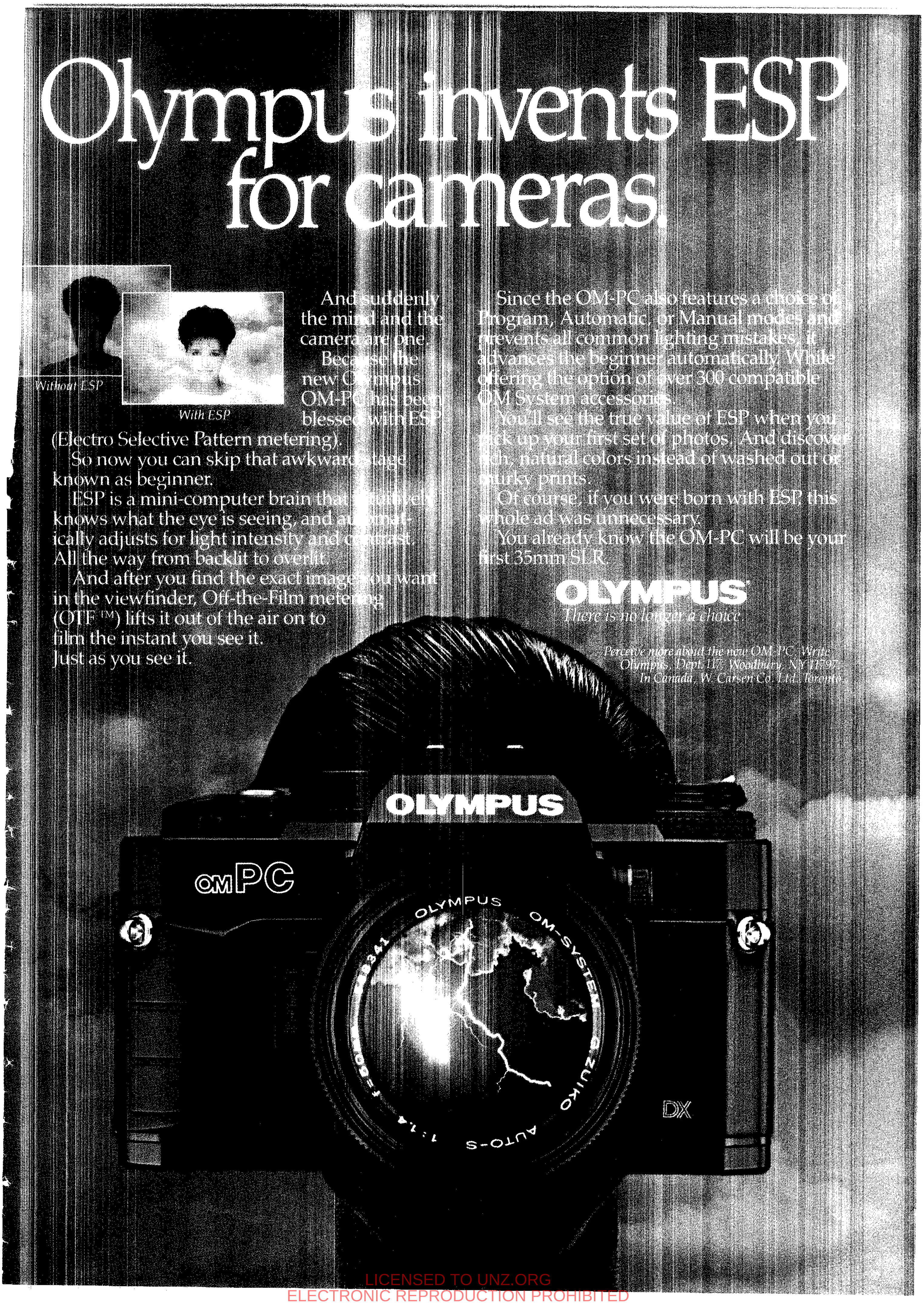

Olympus invents ESP for cameras.

And suddenly the mind and the camera are one.

Because the new Olympus OM-PC has been blessed with ESP (Electro Selective Pattern metering).

So now you can skip that awkward stage known as beginner.

ESP is a mini-computer brain that intuitively knows what the eye is seeing, and automatically adjusts for light intensity and contrast. All the way from backlit to overlit.

And after you find the exact image you want in the viewfinder, Off-the-Film metering (OTF ™) lifts it out of the air on to film the instant you see it. Just as you see it.

Since the OM-PC also features a choice of Program, Automatic, or Manual modes and prevents *all* common lighting mistakes, it advances the beginner automatically. While offering the option of over 300 compatible OM System accessories.

You'll see the true value of ESP when you pick up your first set of photos. And discover rich, natural colors instead of washed out or murky prints.

Of course, if you were born with ESP, this whole ad was unnecessary.

You already know the OM-PC will be your first 35mm SLR.

OLYMPUS
There is no longer a choice.

Perceive more about the new OM-PC. Write: Olympus, Dept. 117, Woodbury, NY 11797. In Canada, W. Carsen Co. Ltd., Toronto.

Why get stuck with a TV from the past, when you can look into the future?
Panasonic presents High-Resolution TV with stereo sound

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Panasonic is ready in many other ways. With 139-channel capability. Cable compatibility. Dual RGB inputs and a Data Grade picture tube for superb computer and teletext graphics. And a unified remote that controls the TV and many of our VCRs.

The Panasonic High-Resolution Color TV with stereo sound. The television for today. And tomorrow. TV picture simulated. Model CTG-2077R

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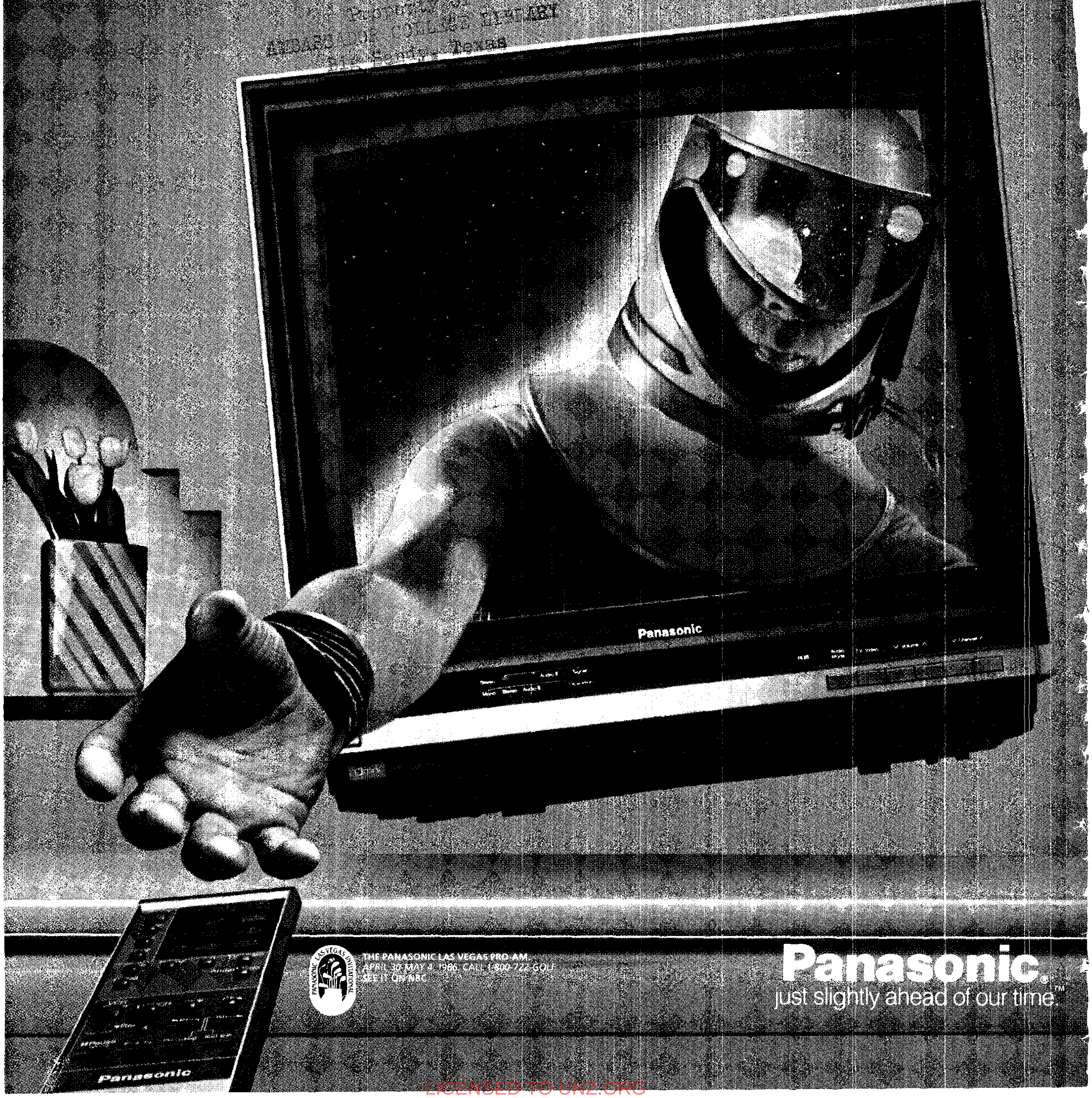

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